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OZARK FANTASIA

HIGHWAYMEN
BUSHRANGERS
IN LAWLESS LANDS
ROMANTIC RASCALS
THE SPREADING STAIN
LIFE OF DAVID LIVINGSTONE
TALES FROM SILVER LAND
TALES WORTH TELLING
HEROES FROM HAKLUYT
FRONTIER BALLADS

OZARK FANTASIA

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BY WAY OF BEGINNING

To
MAUDE THOMAS BLACK
AND
FIELDING P. SIZER

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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OZARK FANTASIA

By Way of Beginning

THIS has to do with a land of magnificent recurrences, a land of hills and of more hills, and of soft beautiful valleys, each one more beautiful than the one before it. It is a land of green-gold woodlands, of sweet dryads, and of mountaineers who place more faith in elves than in elevators. It is a land of high hopes and of mystic allegiances, where songs of tomorrow hold sway in the midst of infinite age. It is a land to which belong neither tears nor loud laughter. I am speaking of the Ozarks.

Of recent years they have been calling the Ozarks "the Land of a Million Smiles." These half-dozen words carry a point for thought. As for myself, I was born in the Ozarks and I have lived and browsed and rambled among them for all my insufficient years, and they have been years teeming with sweet pastures for the spirit, with avenues of romance and wonderment.

On the other hand, there's the stand for the right of contentment without an exorbitant¹ yardage of smiles, of gladness without guffaws.² Now I ask you, consider the concluding hundred and ninety-two pages of our two-hundred-page All-American magazines. Notice the advertising artist's American, the

recipient of services, the ultimate consumer, the advertised average, who must wake in the morning smiling over having slept on a Super-Excelsior mattress, who exhibits a hail-fellow smile and a husky physique as he slips into his Rip-Resisting underwear, smiles as he sums up the marvels of manufacture that go into the making of Hole-Soled socks, chuckles as he slips on his Seven-Secrets suspenders, smiles because his Haven-of-Safety razor will cut, philosophizes jocundly at the increased acreage of lather forthcoming from Cold-Olive shaving cream, simulates the posture and expression of a dry horse who has bitten into a sour pickle as he congratulates Dent-O-Pep on making him a lucky fifth, smiles confidently because there are Butter-Cutter creases in his pants, smiles because his shoes are equipped with Catspaw rubber heels, rides smilingly to work on Bounce-Proof cushions, dispenses service with a smile throughout the day, smilingly eats a supper protected by the Green-and-Purple label, and falls presently into smiling slumber due again to the Super-Excelsior mattress.

But the Ozark hills,—theirs is a world foreign to advertising, and sales luring, and trade slogans, and patched pavements, and scampering traffic, and dollar-grabbing. For one, I hope and believe that the Ozarks will never be commercialized more than high-way deep, for theirs is a land of daintiness, of magnificent timidity, of romantic vagary, and of transcending ethereality. The Ozarks are a land for poets, for the worshippers of the gods of Life and Beauty, a land for the happy poor.

And speaking of being poor, I have a friend in the general neighborhood of Red Star who has been

singled out as the poorest man in Arkansas. Strange as it may sound, I believe him the richest man in the world,—which calls for more talk, as they say in the House of Representatives.

He is a tall, swarthy-skinned, white-haired first-settler. He has a leaky home to himself, soaring ideals, and a couple of suits of overalls tattered almost beyond identity. His philosophy is one of ramshackled benevolence. He says he is never lonesome because the fairies come about and sing to him every day and keep him in an ecstasy with their winsome capers, which is altogether fitting and proper, because from a viewpoint of ancestry, he is "dark Irish."

Nor is this all. He knows the whereabouts of magic cities, which are not, after all, just a pace beyond the horizon, but lie in grassy valleys or along the beds of mountain streams where a commonplace citizen would least suspect them. Why, he says, there are no end of magic cities among the patch of hills between Red Star and St. Paul, if a person but knows where to look.

And how do you locate them? Likely as not you do it by sound. Perhaps you may hear something which at first thought you take to be the tinkle of an old brass bell on a stray cow. You keep listening, and presently you hear the sound of a great many tiny bells or chimes, and you follow them over the top of a hill, peep down, and there you see a magic city, small enough to lie comfortably in the circle of your arm.

How does a magic city look? Well, it's dainty and exquisite, and always flooded with golden light. All in all, magic cities are the best cities in the

world because they are serene and clean, and beautiful always. Rains cannot splatter them, winds cannot topple them, age cannot destroy them,—they are there to stand and stand forever.

Too, this man of the backhills says that he hears the mighty melodies of the universe, the songs of the suns, and the deathless harmonies of space.

My ramblings in the Ozarks have been done principally afoot. There are five reasons for this; the first three are that I have no automobile, the fourth is that I consider myself as competent to walk as any horse, and the fifth is that being afoot places one on more of a plane of understanding with the aristocracy of the backhills.

By the way, I am just home from a tramp among the hills farther back, and it was a journey of quaint situations.

They had been telling me all along that leaning against awning posts was unsafe, especially if I leaned against one that was "onsarten." I did. It came loose at the top and there I was falling straight down.

The village flapper, daughter of the cream and poultry man, offered me part of her glass of cherry Coco-Cola for comfort's sake, and the storekeeper allowed that he would surely take me into the next town except for the fact that the motor out of his Ford automobile was spread all over his parlor and bedroom. Not being hurt, I appreciated the spirit of the thing, so, an onlooker, a rusty, sunburnt spectacled young man who appeared to be writhing under the first pains of book-learning, the storekeeper, and I sat down on the counter beneath an

overhanging stock of lamp chimneys, ax handles and snuff cartons, and began to get the lay of things through conversation.

Presently the storekeeper's coon-hound strolled in and began looking wistfully towards the round of cheese and whining ever so softly.

The animal smelt of distant woodlands and vanquished polecats, and had a confiding nature and a peculiar squareness of chest.

"He got a little blunt-chested from pushin' hisself after rabbits when he was a puppy," the owner explained.

We parted the best of friends. Towards noon I fell in with a little gnome-like fellow. He was no more than four feet tall, but when he lifted off his battered hat I saw that his hair was foamy white. He was bare-footed and wore a musty yellow work-shirt and faded blue overalls which had been mended and re-mended until the shape and location of every consecutive patch appeared to be a practical outlet for the meandering imagination of the mender.

We exchanged "Good Mornings" and he told me that his name was Sammy Blankhall, that he was sixty-three years old, that although he was born somewhere down on James River, he has lived within two miles of Shell Knob for sixty years. He said further that he owned a ten-acre patch of ground half-a-mile up the road to the left. It is a good place, too, he said, because there is never any standing water on that tater-knob sort of country, and because the valleys are deep and cool in summer, and in winter they are protected from the cold winds.

The river water we found clear and sweet, the hills shone green-gold in their flood of spring sun-

light, and we tramped along in a general beatitude of contentment. The country has a Parnassian freedom from fences; and cows, dangling their copper bells, were munching at roadside pastures. A warm breeze struck me like a delectable opiate, and I meditated upon hosts of jubilation. A farmer girl was combing her hair in mountain sunlight and in front of us were hillsides of shade and acres of sky.

Now and then we passed a farmhouse. For the most part they are dilapidated with age and exposure, in color a paintless powdery gray. Some are built of logs with weatherboarded lean-tos, others all of boards. Most of them are deeply shaded with maples and cedars, and the yards are gone to brambles. Half of the houses, in parts, are empty; the fields about them grown to sassafras and oak saplings.

My companion explained that in these days of hard times people just couldn't scrape out a living from the poorest of the hill farms, and therefore had no course left other than to pack up and leave.

"It's dif'rent heah in the hills from what it is on the highways an' close to big towns. Folks theah has good roads, an' markets, an' they can borry money in ha'd times, but heah when prices fall plum' to rock bottom, an' crops are spindlin', an' dry weath-ah makes the cawn go to little squirrel-headed nubbins that all Hell can't shuck,—well, we don't like it, but they ain't nothin' to do except move off the land."

He told me that his father and mother were folks (blood kin) and added that there are many little people in the hills, fine people all, except for the fact that they just didn't get their growth. He told

me that he had kept a store at Shell Knob for twenty-odd years, that he had done well, too, until one night the store burnt to the ground, and since there was no insurance, he had been left not only penniless, but heavily in debt for a newly increased stock.

Then he stopped to show me his farm, a hillside patch, neatly kept, and surrounded by a fence built of brush.

"I never was no hand to put good money in them wire fences, an' I ain't stout enough to split rails, so I've been a-buildin' brush fences. Purty good fences, too, 'cept they're easy burned up. An' well, maybe they won't keep a cow plumb out, but they shore will dishearten her from a-passin' through."

He asked me into the single-room log cabin which he called home. In a bin built in a corner were bushels and bushels of black walnuts. He explained that he was paying off what he owed the wholesale grocery house by picking out and selling walnut kernels. I left, admiring the man most profoundly. His is an integrity which age, and ridicule, and deformity cannot conquer, a morality which would have been a tribute to Kant or Socrates.

Presently the road widened and I was in Shell Knob. The village consists of a general merchandise store and a Church of Christ. On the high-set porch of the former half-a-dozen countrymen were lounging with god-like complacency, whittling matches into infinitesimal slivers, and spasmodically discussing crops, and hunting dogs, and horses; the latter they classified in terms varying from fox-trotter to buzzard-bait. Presently talk livened a bit and began to incorporate current cornbread and

branch water hard times, reasons for the heavy mist about the horizon, blackberry winter, and new fangled oats. Now and then one of the group would pause to whistle a tune which resembled nothing in particular, and things were going on quietly as could be when Bill Skeats, Charlie Holme's hired boy, came flopping along in over-sized overalls and pearl-buttoned shirt. The laughter was general before he was more than in sight, but arrived, he took the helm of the conversation, and they laughed and laughed all through the afternoon. Never have I heard such sincere, such deep-bubbling mirth. There was no dinner-table tittering, no booming guffaws, none of the amen-corner type appropriate when Bishop Bronson, who is absolutely the funniest man you ever heard, exhorts the brethren to ha-ha jar loose from their ha-ha lucre for the new Epworth annex before he has to ha-ha blast it loose from them. Nothing of the sort. They laugh because the spirit of joy is within them, because God is at their finger-tips and not at their purse-strings.

Towards sunset I passed an inland battlefield. Sixty-eight years have come and gone since they fought the battle of Elks Horn tavern. Sixty-eight winters have watered the sedge grass with cold rains and buried the fields in sleet and snow. Sixty-eight summers with their spring floods and south winds have blown the breath of life into the trees and grass, and touched the valleys with green and gold. And through this circus-parade of years a hand-hacked pillar supporting a square-headed angel stands as a monument to those phantom regiments that marched from the dawn of life into the night of death. The shattered sunlight fell upon the silk-blue

hills, a far-off, rumbling farm wagon echoed forgotten cannonades, the frogs croaked, and the oak buds were swelling in the rush of another spring.

Presently moonlight touched the hills, the open road stretched before me, and there was a star to guide.

It may be that the tolerant reader has been wondering for some time now just how all this happens to be an introduction. After careful consideration, I believe it best to pass such a question by as a logical immensity,—as the college professors say.

But the moving idea is this: the hour draws near, the grease paints are open, the stage is set, life's a drama, the world's a stage, the play's the thing, the main act is ready, and so— Up with the curtain!

CHARLES MORROW WILSON

Fayetteville, Arkansas,
July, 1927.

A Parable

ONCE there was an enlightened old gentleman, one of much excellence and courtliness, very good-natured and hospitable, much given to books and the quiet companionship of friends, anxious to increase happiness, and, as far as money goes, comfortably situated at the moment this story opens. But, for some extraordinary reason which he could not understand, quite unexpectedly he lost his income. Actually the loss had its origin in foreign affairs and diplomacies, and resulted from the speculative activities of men whose existence he did not suspect, and he first became aware of the change in his fortunes from a statement which he received, quite uninteresting and very indefinite. He read it, or rather he mechanically followed the written words, for, at the time, his mind was on a book about Ruthenia, then he folded up the paper and placed it away carefully in the X section of an encyclopedia which chanced to lay open on the table, intending to study it at leisure; then closed the X to Yak volume with a sigh of satisfaction, turned to his book and so forgot all about the letter. Nor did he recall the incident until, some weeks later, a business-like letter from his banker made him realize with a shock that there were clouds ahead. The saddest part of it was that he could not remember where he had hidden the important letter, for his general reading seldom took him to X in

his reference library. Had he been able to produce the document, and had he taken it to his banker who was an expert in certain matters, it is highly probable that certain machinations might have been frustrated, and at least a small part of the old gentleman's fortune would have been recovered after due process of law. However, it is idle to speculate upon what might have happened had something chanced to happen which did not happen. The certain part of the history is that there was a sharp break between the old gentleman and the active world of affairs.

At first he viewed things with an amused surprise, much as would a man who, having gone for a walk dressed for a summer day, found himself caught in a short rain shower and heard low melodious thunder far away. So he went on buying books and having them charged as usual, and he went on inviting his friends to dinners which he had charged as usual. The truth is that he was quite unaware of the spirit of the law which required him, at once, to notify the whole world of the change in his affairs. Also he was quite inexpert in any kind of publicity. And, furthermore, his old ways and habits could not fade swiftly. But chiefly there was certain elasticity in him, a kind of living joy, so that his hopes were always large. For there was no change which he could detect, neither in himself nor in the world.

He was sharply reminded of economic forces when his bookseller, who was naturally polite and patient, and his caterer who had always been gracious in manner, both having faith in the old gentleman because of long associations, showed signs of uneasiness. For the bookseller, being gentle as most of

that profession are, one day asked the old gentleman whether, by any possibility, some inaccuracy of detail had prevented the customary settlement. It was then that the memory of matters came with a shock. "God bless my soul!" exclaimed the old gentleman, "I quite forgot that I have no money at all. It is a most amazing state of affairs. And the most extraordinary part of it is that I have not the slightest idea how people get money if they cannot draw it out of the bank." He appeared so sincerely disturbed for the moment, that the bookseller, who himself knew something of the errors of memory, begged him to say no more about the matter.

You, who read, being subtle as I am, and perhaps knowing something of psychology, will understand that the bookseller was of a divided mind. That is, he could no more believe that his customer was in financial difficulties than he could believe that the sun would not rise in the morning. He also thought that the little play was a sort of dramatic performance enacted for the purpose of trade. And there was another thought in his mind, which went to the effect that by some whimsy the old gentleman thus tried to persuade himself that he could not afford to buy, or wished to resist the temptation to buy an exceptionally fine copy of the first edition of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which he actually held in his hand. Indeed, so persuaded was the bookseller that the old gentleman's outburst was a mere figure of speech, that at the end of the interview this was said:

"Shall I charge it to your account?"

"If you will be so kind."

And the old gentleman walked off with the rare book under his arm, a very happy man, while the

bookseller opened his ledger and wrote a figure and two naughts in the column for dollars against the old gentleman's name, and was also very happy.

The truth is that two contradictory systems had come, both at once, into the lives of the men, and so very suddenly, that neither could become accommodated to new conditions. So also it was with the caterer, who called upon the old gentleman for a quiet talk. But that talk was not what he had planned, for, with great joy the old gentleman showed his new purchase, referring off-handedly to the price, which price struck the caterer as being enormous, and in the end the business man went away in a happier frame of mind than he had arrived at the house, believing that any change in fortune was remote from reality.

So things went very well for a while, with all men kindly disposed, and hopeful that matters would right themselves, until the day of the tax-gathering came. But the tax-gatherer was not kindly disposed at all. When, in his trustfulness and guilelessness, the old gentleman assured him that without doubt all would go well, the other positively refused to acquiesce in any such possibility. Instead, he went on in his own way, and an unpleasant one it was, telling of the needs of his Government, giving his views on the duty of citizens, speaking of the inflexibility of the Law, and then saying that the old gentleman would be taken, and shaken, after which, if money was not forthcoming, there would be Processes by which, not only the first edition of Pilgrim's Progress would be seized, but the very etchings and oil paintings on the wall, the very rugs from the floor, even those books with bindings in

rich levant which the old gentleman loved to touch with his finger-tips for the sheer joy of feeling their velvet smoothness. And he was ejaculatory going out of the library, and through the hall, and on the outer steps, saying, at the end of the interview, that his Duty made him what he was, and that he was a Servant of the People; though the old gentleman thought that a more denunciatory and censorious servant it had not fallen to his lot to meet.

The worst of it was that things came to pass much as the tax-gatherer had predicted. For, on an evil day the library was divested of its secrecy. All that shelter and warmth and comfort vanished. Almost it seemed that old memories were taken away with the chairs and tables and shining glass and silver. Because the Government took not only its just due, but more to cover the cost of the taking, tax-gathering being an expensive process. Others came; not themselves, to be exact, but their representatives. There were caterer, and bookseller, and art dealer, and people to whom it seemed he owed small and pitiful amounts which he had forgotten. And although they were abundantly gratified, yet many grumbled, saying that they had lost, which was not true; but it is the fashion of men to pretend to great losses (and also great gains) on occasion. But the wonderful thing was how much the collection of debts seemed to cost. In the end the old gentleman was left without those comforts to which he had always thought himself entitled, and found himself living in a shell of a house, with those who still talked to him giving uncomfortable glimpses and hints of a time when he would meet his end by starvation.

Now comes the point of the story, also the application of it. And, mark you, I am well aware that to follow the approved method the tale should have been made swift and sharp, and the whole of this disposed of in a brief paragraph (according to instructors in the art of writing), the which I could do if I chose. But I do not so choose, holding that there is also interest in a tale leisurely told; and often, if we bide our time and listen, we become conscious of a pleasant onrush of thoughts at a word here and a sentence there, much as a man may enjoy a long walk and things seen by the way, although his errand takes him to a certain place to which he can go and transact his business in a few minutes if he chooses to ride in an automobile. But who would sum up Romeo and Juliet in the words, "They loved but, misunderstanding, died"? Or, to put it another way. Do we sit at the table only to satisfy our bodies with this chemical atom and that? Is there not something in the presence of a friend or friends? Is it not the game that delights us, and not the end? But to the tale.

This old gentleman was one of strange shyness. Perhaps it was not as much shyness in him, as a disposition which made him very unwilling to cast the slightest shadow of grief on others. He was not of the sort that, having a toothache, must needs inflict the tale of his sufferings upon others. He enjoyed meeting his friends in a book-lined room and doing what he could to stir his party to mirth. Or, being abroad, and knowing of grief, it was his habit to point out wonderful and beautiful things, things exquisite and fine, things clean and fragrant, so that the unpleasant was missed and an hour made pleas-

ant. Indeed there was a mixture of things in him, as in all men. But, also, there was a pride in him which was not to be broken. Because of that he went about, hiding what grave issues there were in his heart; hiding too the gnawings of hunger, so that those he met never guessed that the courteous and interested old gentleman munched a roll in secrecy. Yet he did exactly that.

One day, the man who had been his caterer and grocer took him in hand, as the saying is. He showed him how easy it was to trade, how simple the science of exchange, how smooth the ways of commerce, and, as the old gentleman listened, and as the caterer put it, all did seem easy. For, as the caterer explained, all that the old gentleman had to do was to offer something for sale which the people wanted, then go about announcing his wares. "As for a false feeling of shyness," he said to the old gentleman, "that is utter nonsense. Did you look down upon the bookseller because he offered rare folios? Did you have a feeling of scorn for the art dealer when he offered you that signed Hogarth?" And the old gentleman could not but admit that he had known nothing of the sort, but, on the contrary, felt a warmth about the heart, and had looked upon both bookseller and art dealer as good friends, and, the transaction being completed, was himself delighted as one who had triumphed and succeeded. "Then," said the caterer, "it must be obvious that if you go forth, loins girded and staff in hand, as it were, a man of occupation, a part of the social organization, offering the world something tangible, others must regard you much in the same light as you regarded the bookseller and the art dealer." And that seemed

true to the old gentleman as he listened, though the part about "social organization" he did not so much enjoy.

However, he placed himself in the hands of his former caterer, as I have said, giving himself to the study of facts as well as he could, (effective concentration, the caterer called it, for he loved the jargon of commercialism), though, as he listened, the memory of other things flickered in his mind—such as talks with friends, and Venetian glass, and Benedictine and monks; or '71 port, a spring day, a line from some poet, and so on, but all quite unrelated to the matter in hand. Those interruptions he could not help, and it was bewildering to have to thrust them aside and attend to facts about strawberries, for the sale of that fruit was in the caterer's mind.

To cut a long story short, one morning the caterer showed the old gentleman a neatly arrayed push-cart, a machine light to handle, which could be propelled without much effort. On the barrow strawberries were set in baskets, and delicate leaves had been stuck here and there to give an effect of color balance, and little tickets were stuck in the sides of the baskets announcing that the price of each one was fifteen cents, or two of them for a quarter. Then the caterer led the old gentleman to the shafts or handles of the push cart, and taught him how to lift, and how to push and to propel the machine, not lifting too high lest the baskets be disarranged, nor too low, lest two legs or standards of wood scrape the ground and make propulsion more difficult. Having done all that he placed a hand on the shoulder of the old gentleman in a friendly way, and bade him go forward into the

world bawling his wares and so laying the foundation of a new fortune. But the old gentleman was not zestful. Indeed he somewhat delayed matters, commencing to argue with wonderful ingenuity about the elasticity of price, saying that if one basket was sold for fifteen cents, then it was too great a reduction, and obviously unfair, to offer two for less than thirty cents. At that the caterer spoke in an impassioned sort of way, saying things about his own soul and its future, proclaiming himself, indeed, to be one eternally lost; though he spoke metaphorically. Yet his words had weight, and did something to urge the old gentleman.

Also a passing policeman grew interested and said, a little abruptly, that it ought not to take a lifetime for a push-cart man to get started, knowing nothing of the irony of his remark. But it made the old gentleman nervous, nevertheless, for he feared that unwittingly he might have committed a new offense against the law. So he launched his machine forward, and presently, after weariness, came to a street in which he knew many family circles. But out of the houses no one came to inspect his wares, as, in his innocence he had expected would happen, when he first thought of embarking upon his commercial crusade. And that fiber of diffidence in his composition forbade a knocking at doors to announce his errand. Nor could he coerce himself into making alarms at the domestic entrances of houses. At the same time his sense of humor told him that it was ridiculous and hopeless for him to trundle his push-cart up and down and round about, while the sun's heat robbed his fruit of its richness of hue and destroyed his only tangible assets.

Suddenly memories and associations awoke in him, and he recalled with a start of surprise that he often had heard vendors announcing their wares, and even remembered times when, hearing the newsboy's raucous voice, he himself had been induced to make purchases. Thereupon he cleared his throat and opened his mouth, intending to cry aloud; but no sound came. He was willing, even anxious, to announce what he had to offer, but his inner man took unfair advantage of him. In vain did he set before himself the ideal of Dr. Johnson selling books at Litchfield, of Thoreau peddling lead pencils of his own make, of William Morris acting newsboy with his Commonweal, of Chatterton dispensing powders and drugs, of Villon offering his own poems. The business of distribution seemed to become every moment more complex, its methods and processes more elaborate. For a minute he contemplated leaving the push-cart and his wares in the middle of the street and taking himself off. Indeed he had almost started to do so when he became aware of a woman looking at him thoughtfully, and, as he feared, suspiciously. At that memories of things read came into his mind—how one murderer had trundled the corpse of his victim through the streets, hidden under small merchandise; how another had carried a human head wrapped in a carpet; how characters in the Arabian Nights had transported dead bodies. So he was full of fear.

But the woman, as it soon appeared, had no other desire than to buy strawberries. And as he noted with pleasure, she was comely and bright-eyed and smiling.

"I will," she said, "take two baskets."

"Madam," he answered, "you are entirely welcome," and he saluted her with courtesy, indicating two especially fine baskets, and adding to them some choice berries from neighboring baskets which he privately determined to sell at a lower price.

Somewhat taken aback she offered him a silver dollar, and he found himself strangely perturbed. For he had no change, nor could he ask her to guard his wares while he ran to get small money. What was worse, when he should have taken the coin, that inner man of his again played traitor. A vision of Cæsar thrusting away the kingly crown occupied him for a flash. So he said: "Madam, you are entirely welcome to the berries. I trust that you will find them good and wholesome." And seeing that she drew back a little in alarm at his speech, he tried to reassure her, saying that he would consider her acceptance of the baskets as a gracious act. Whereupon she took them with grace and they parted.

Now the street thereafter broadened into a wider one, and of more architectural dignity. Indeed it was a place where the old gentleman had many acquaintances. So he thought to hurry through it and find an unfamiliar neighborhood. But in that he was unsuccessful. For who should accost him but his friend the caterer, and he in no pleasant mood. He informed the old gentleman that he had been watching him from afar. He went on to say accusatory things, telling the strawberry merchant that he had neither moral nor legal right to give his wares away to women, seeing that they were not yet paid for. He expostulated because the old gentleman had gone his way dumbly, not advertising, the which he denounced as a silly piece of business. He further ex-

plained that loud vociferation was a part of commerce. He gave it as his opinion that the old gentleman deserved all that he suffered seeing that he did not know enough to guard himself from that poverty which was at his elbow. Then he became softer in demeanor and speech, persuading and pleading, saying that honest trade was interesting and worth attention, that bankruptcy was a disheartening state, that whoso went about in fear because of his poverty, might end in making an idol of despair; beside much more that presently became painful to listen to. But all that he had said paled into insignificance when he declared that if the old gentleman refused or failed to cry his wares along that particular street, he, the caterer, would knock at each and every door of houses in which dwelt those who were acquaintances of the old gentleman, telling whosoever appeared that a new partnership in the world of trade had been formed, and in order to recuperate his fallen fortunes, the old gentleman offered fresh and fine strawberries at a price which compared favorably with prices elsewhere. Hearing that, and noting the caterer's determination, the old gentleman became much concerned, provisioning a throng of his acquaintances crowding about his push-cart, buying eagerly, not because of their needs, but because of sympathy.

Whereupon he promised amendment. He assured the caterer that by offering to knock at doors, he proffered quite unnecessary service. Yet, as he said that he knew he lied, and that not a single strawberry would he sell except people came clamoring, and even then he would be more apt to give them

away than to sell them. Still, the caterer's words were a kind of stimulant.

And such was the old gentleman's anxiety, an anxiety born of fear that his friends might suffer distress by the importunate conduct of the caterer and a sight of his own plight, that he earnestly besought that active-minded man to contain himself a little while longer, and asked him for fresh instruction in the art of calling his wares, as to pitch and loudness of voice, and teaching anew the proper words. So the caterer relented and did as he was asked, teaching the old gentleman with much detailed information a quaint kind of chant; advising him to look first to this side and then to that as he cried, to the end that the inmates of houses on both sides of the street might be advised; drilling him in the fashion and disposal of his hands by placing them at the side of his mouth so that the sound of his cry might be focused.

The old gentleman heard all attentively, practising the call inaudibly, though, meanwhile, such is the manner of the human mind, which none may properly fathom, while all that was going on he found himself privately protesting against what struck him as an arithmetical paradox, in that two baskets of fruit were offered at less than twice the price of one. Moreover, he considered it unjust that a man who needed no more than one basket must by that arrangement pay proportionately more than he who needed two. There was, too, he thought, an invitation to dishonesty, inasmuch as two strangers conspiring together, might obtain each a basket at lower price than two honest men who did not so

conspire. Or again in certain cases it seemed possible that the elasticity of price might become an invitation to gluttony. All of that he thought while his lesson was proceeding, and while the caterer said parting words, encouraging ones of wonderful prospects. For he drew a picture of vast business activities in bananas and in oranges when the strawberry harvest time should be ended, though that brought no sense of overflowing joy to the old gentleman, but that he did not reveal, fearing to annoy the caterer who was much more austere in their present relations than he had been in the old. So, sighing heavily, the old gentleman lifted the handles of his little cart and pushed forward, as he had been taught.

For ten lengths of his push-cart he went, trying the while to find his voice, but uttering no word, though he opened and shut his mouth, framing his lips in the manner of one who called aloud. So he was like a man in a nightmare, sighing plaintively, trying in vain to call, and feeling almost like one who walks shamelessly abroad in the light of day without a stitch of clothing. That last was because he had a consciousness of having outrageously overstepped the modesty of his own nature. Meanwhile he told himself over and over again that the character of the service he rendered society did actually require a measure of publicity which, in itself, had nothing about it that was intrinsically dishonorable. And he might have gone another ten lengths, or ten times ten cart lengths in silence had he not caught sight of the caterer. For the man was making signs at which the old gentleman became faint with consternation. He was pointing at a certain house,

not in any friendly manner, but rather as one who had been thwarted and betrayed. And in that house dwelt a book-lover and a friend, one of very high intelligence. To make matters worse, the caterer put his hand to his mouth, as if in the act of shouting, then made as to mount the doorsteps. Whereupon the old gentleman was terror-stricken, catching the underlying threat. So he gathered together all his forces. Once, and once only he repeated to himself the chant or cry he had been taught, to make certain that he had the wording of it correct, then though he felt his hair start at the nape of his neck, he said, rather than shouted:

“Strawberries! Fifteen cents a basket! Two for two bits!”

So far was he from being lustily vociferous, that, had anyone been standing ten feet distant, with difficulty he could have caught the words. Nevertheless, such was the sensitiveness of the old gentleman, that hardly had the nine words fallen from his lips, than he looked about him fearfully, full of a fanciful notion that he had shaken the very windows, and said to himself: “Goodness! I hope that nobody heard me.”

And so he went on, announcing his wares in a voice that was almost inaudible, but regretting what seemed to him his presumption, bringing to pass a physical achievement and immediately rendering it naught, persuading himself to publicity but holding the hiding of himself under a bushel as ultimate goal, pretending to self-assertion but aiming at hiddenness. Indeed, such was the man’s nature, that had he been surrounded by crowds eager for his wares, he would in some sort have usurped his own supremacy

and his earnest prayer must have been one that he might suddenly vanish as a bubble does. And, to tell the truth, he counted it as a triumph indeed that he found his way out of the street without being accosted. Nor would the reasoned arguments of the villain caterer have availed one whit. For he knew the

“Sorrow that is not sorrow but delight”

as Wordsworth has it.

And, to properly round off the tale, when the caterer again came upon him, which he did not long after, for being full of subtlety he had gone around by another way, and when, seeing how matters stood he said that he did not understand the old gentleman, the old gentleman responded that neither did he understand himself. Which must have been true, because as most of us know, the self does, most successfully elude philosophical analysis.

There is a moral to this, but I cannot remember what it is.

Week End

YESTERDAY there was an impromptu party. For there came to Gayeta Glenn Ward Dresbach, and a young violinist named Peyton Gulick, guided by a very wholesome and large-hearted friend of mine named Fielding P. Sizer. And Sizer did things in the grand style. Mindful of kitchen burdens, he brought with him a brace of capons, vegetables from his own gardens, fruits from his Texas orchard, cheese of a singular mildness, and much more. Indeed, he searched Fayetteville for a chef to lighten the work of the day, but, happily for himself, failed in the quest. For, observe, a right woman makes a work of art of a dinner. So Mrs. F., with Margaret helping, were happy to prove themselves, and most glorious was the outcome. Fourteen sat down to dinner, young and old; a most noble table it was, with tall candles alight, and shining glass and silver, and homemade bread and butter; and conversation general with the younger ones not excluded; and many a good-humored joke; and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony going on the Orthophonic with no one attending in the least, until the spring ran down—the music having done its part in establishing a noisy atmosphere of mirthful talk.

It was in the tree-shaded lane that I met them. My arms were laden with mail, for I had been to the highway, and when Dresbach jumped out of the auto and began shaking my hand, I shed mail as a

tree sheds autumn leaves. The sun paled at our warmth of greeting, for we have corresponded for some five years so were glad to foregather. An hour later we were all on the mountain top, seated on the great bare rock where I have sat with Sandburg, and Major, and Masters, and Fletcher, and Roberts, and Powys, and Honoré. And it is a good place in which to sit and talk. To the south, across a valley, the tree-clad mountain is fresh and sharp and clear; a wonder of green, with deep-violet hollows like caves. When the wind freshens there is a sound from it like the sea tumbling on surf, and the mountain seems to throb with life. And under the sunlight it is green-gold and green-silver. The valley runs eastward and you catch the glint of living water between trees, for a stream flows there, coming out of a rent in the hills, and dancing through another cleft down to our farm. But the valley seems to be a cup in the hills, for it meets another valley, so to the east you see only a chain of rounded hills, beyond those other hills, and still others, rising higher and higher. And there's a purple mountain in the distance, and then the sky, with white ships that are clouds.

Dresbach is the most modest of men. It is a kind of modesty that grows out of a free, liberal and unrestricted life. You have seen that kind of modesty in travelers who have seen much. It is a kind of refusal to intrude, an unwillingness to be too much in the foreground. He is willing to tell you of the pageant, but you must forget the teller. He will tell you of the haze-hung mountains, but you must look at and think of them, not of him. For, you see, his poetry is the discerning of beauty, as poetry should be. And, as poet should, he endeavors to awaken in the hearer the

emotions he himself felt, even those emotions which dwelt deep in the mind and soul and were not heard or seen.

The following poem he read to us, but not until Sizer had produced it, for Dresbach wrote it the day before at "Callamura," Sizer's home, and to him the ode is affectionately dedicated.

TO THE OZARKS

By Glenn Ward Dresbach

Your forests are crowned with dawn,
And out of the dawn bright wings
Arise like sparks and are gone
Along the impassioned sky.
And my heart lifts and sings
For air that danced over stars,
As the clear spring-water streams
Dance over the polished stones,
Swirls on its rainbowed bars
And sprays my flesh and bones
And washes over my dreams.

I stand like one in a pool
Of your mountain springs,
Cleaned and refreshed and cool—
With the feel of wings!

But O, for greater wings
Than wings of a bird
Or of a heart that sings,
To dart and dip
In rippled lakes of the sky,
To rise, from the surface stirred,
In an arc, and drip
With a rainbow shower.

And then, near earth, to fly
And brush each thirsting lip
Through this enchanted hour
Till myriad hearts revive
To breathe of it—alive
As one who stands in a pool
Of your mountain springs,
Cleaned and refreshed and cool—
With the feel of wings!

Gulick and I had a fine time, forgetting about the others. He is a clever young violinist, and, having some half-dozen pieces of music with him, we played them, I doing the piano accompaniment, and, as an artful fellow will, going very pianissimo over the doubtful and difficult passages so that my shortcomings were not easily apparent. Then someone brought out a bundle of new publications and we went at those, until, having learned something of each other's ways, we fell into jollities. So Gulick played old-time things, such as Swanee River, and Last Rose of Summer, and that kind of thing, and I improvised a startling set of accompaniments, then, of a sudden, made an attack upon Turkey in the Straw and Gulick rose to it. Up and down we went, doing fantastic things in the way of surprises, and, moved by a strange and wistful longing to express himself, what did Sizer do but get on his feet and cut a pigeon's wing as once did Thoreau, you remember, that time the over-sage Alcott became too orphic for mortal minds.

So there you have a hint of a pleasant day in which young and middle-aged joined, everyone delighted and pleased, though this latter part with the clog dancing and the jolly music might have shocked

those trained and fastidious folk who take correspondence lessons in *How to Conduct Yourself in Society*. Daggone 'em!

Out of that visit came this book, for Sizer, who is one of those men who has not been robbed of his enthusiasm because of the daily drudgery—Sizer said, "Why not a book about the Ozarks?" And with the idea began building. "Let it be a thinking aloud kind of book—let's gather together what has been said of the high-hearted companions who have been to Gayeta—let's put in another section those stories written for the youngsters, at fire-side readings."

So he went on and on, and as he planned the thing grew and grew, so here it is. But I didn't make the book. It was done by Charles Wilson; and behind him, backing him, persuading him, there was the energetic, enthusiastic, boyishly-happy Fielding P. Sizer. That's how things fell out.

TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

An Ozark Fantasia

IT was in northwest Arkansas, where Paul Honoré and I have been tramping. But that which you are to hear is not of its commercial side.

I say that, because there are people given to fall into a kind of mystical rapture of what is really self-exaltation about places, a reflex egoism, measuring all things by dimes and dollars to the exclusion of everything else. And, as you may have noticed, if you look too closely at a dime, you will blot out the whole horizon; earth, sky, all mankind. Now my contention is that no census ever yet taken served to show the number of men and women who care nothing at all about how many factories or mines or skyscrapers a place has, just as on being introduced to a man they care nothing at all about his bank account, or the size of his hat, or the price he paid for his shoes. But they do care a great deal about his character and the manner of man he is; whether he is a buoyant gentleman or a burglar, a friendly companion or a pirate, a man with an eye to your pleasure or an eye to your pocketbook. In the same way, many men and more women are more interested in the character than the commerce of places.

Indeed, it was because of something said about the character of Arkansas that we took our trip. For in St. Louis we met Opie Read, who is a novelist, somewhat pooh-poohed, it is true, by supercilious young gentlemen, who stand in ecstatic admiration

of themselves as the illuminati. Yet many may recall a time when Old Lim Jucklins and other books by the same hand were as popular as old ballads, or Mother Goose stories. And they were novels which a man could understand and enjoy; not full of sex and sentimentality, not wandering and incoherent and of a sort to leave you miserable and wondering whether you or the writer were weak-minded; but rattling good stories with the subtle qualities of unity and vigor of narration, the characters in them full of naturalness. Reading them, you had the feeling that you had lived among the characters described, and, indeed, some of them were very much like the folk in this same Ozark country.

Naturally, as we talked, something of that was said, at which Opie Read's eyes brightened, and he said: "Now somehow the people in those parts of the land had a notion that I wrote *A Slow Train Through Arkansas*, poking fun at them, so grew touchily sensitive to the point of having the book taken from the bookstands in the train. But I didn't write it. And of all spots in the land, I like the countryside in Newton County. The people are God's own . . . By the way, is Uncle John still in the land of the living?"

So we talked on and on, Honoré listening, until, because of what he heard, the artist in him began to burn to see a life he had thought no longer existed. He wanted to see the place, he declared. Whereupon I took him by the hand, poetically speaking, and told him that he should indeed see the Boston mountains, leaving his paints and easels, to embark upon a crusade of joy. I promised to show him people of simple and healthy natures leading a life of their

own, and not immured among conventions and received opinions. He would, I assured him, learn something of the temper and texture of a world untouched by modern methods. He would be among people who knew how to spin, how to make bread, and how to manufacture their own candles; folk who spent winter evenings, not in sitting each one with nose buried in book, but talking and singing ballads as they made quilts, or burred wool, or sewed harness, or churned. He would, I told him, see things in con mon use which, in some parts of the world, were in m useums. That, quite early in his pilgrimage, he found to be true, for he saw and traded for these, which he carried with him, not without pain: a very heavy iron kettle, an earthenware pot, a bow and arrow, some flints, a large stalactite from a cave, and an odd book of Holy Roller songs. He contemplated a spinning-wheel. But that is getting a little ahead of the tale.

For as Opie Read and I told things to Honoré, we saw in him a growing and wrong impression; and that was a supposition that we described the state of Arkansas, instead of only a picturesque part of it. So we set him right by telling that Arkansas followed state fashions and possessed cities, and policemen, and chair factories, and Rotary and Lions clubs, and banks with surpluses, and hot springs, and national cemeteries, and diamond mines, and stone quarries, and literary societies, and churches, and Mrs. Bernie Babcock, who wrote novels about Lincoln, and filling stations, and mortgages, and a university, and newspapers, and a poet who lived in London whose name was John Gould Fletcher, besides many other things going to make up the tapestry of civilization. But the unique part, we told

him, was this interesting thing of which we had been talking, as interesting as the pyramids in Egypt, or the Kalahari Desert in Central Africa. For in that corner of the land the wilderness was not yet tamed, though the tamers were there and at work, and for them I had a most hearty respect. Then when Honoré spoke of an automobile, he was greatly moved at hearing me say that our itinerary was one permitting no such vehicle by reason of the wilderness, and that he must either walk, or ride on horse or mule back.

He tried both methods, but what might be called Sorrow Endured made him choose walking for the long trip. For, on the first day, he mounted Prince, an animal large and bony and heavy of foot, whose trotting has a sort of pile-driving precision about it. The ride he took was to the Labyrinth, where are mighty rocks large as two-storied houses, which once were mountain tops, but are now tumbled to the plain as though cast there by warring Titans. So that evening the artist was somewhat abstracted, almost in the manner of one with unrevealed things on his mind. I imagined that the memory of the rifted crags thrilled and haunted him, until he spoke, with pathos in his voice, of the hardness of saddle leather to one accustomed to an automobile cushion. Yet, in the morning, when he awoke he sang, and his was again the old mood of delight.

And we traveled far that second day. We climbed sun-flooded hills to see haze-hung mountains. We went through gorges between dark slopes, where, on the one hand, were high hills bare and craggy; on the other, steeps clad with tall pines which bent their heads to whisper about us. We stood on precipitous places from which we looked down into

pleased to see visitors—there was no doubting that. For when we spoke of a night's lodging, he said: "Why, a man's house is made for a resting place," and led the way in.

Now of that evening's talk very little can be set down. Such things are to be experienced, not to be imagined. There, in the room, were children and grandchildren, a neighbor or two as well. They had sat together thus a hundred times or more. But there was no sign of boredom. Rather was the atmosphere one of lively interest and eager sympathy. And while each had his or her say, the old man was the center of things. He had a memory stretching far back, and, as he talked, he sat half leaning forward, his chin thrust out, his wrists crossed and his feet a little inturned. He told us of a Civil War battle which he remembered, with people hurrying along a narrow road, and darting into the "sticks" at the sound of guns; of soldiers presently flying in retreat, their horses slipping and sliding on the clay road; of his own boyish wonder at all the stir, not knowing the why nor the wherefore nor the result. "They could have cut all our throats, had they been minded to. But they were not bad men," he said.

One of the children said something and the conversation became more general, about how the world advances, about the wonder of the radio, of water witching by means of a willow twig, of man's duty to man, of experience and the everyday stuff of life. And the talk was double-shotted with queer sayings, as: "You've got to keep your character sound, 'tis like the kettle this stranger carries; once mended always to be mended." Again, when he spoke of a nation buying things on credit, there was this: "A

zag along steep hills, bending upon itself in most astonishing manner. Sometimes the silence is so all-possessing that when one stands still there comes a consciousness of the sound of heartbeats. Or the quiet is pierced by the musical sound of some distant cock, trumpeting his warrior challenge. Or you sit to rest, to find yourself dropping to sleep, soothed by the murmur of the water-splash.

And the people? Well, for one thing they behave gently to their beasts. For another, they are given to hospitality. For another, there is a careful civility to the stranger. I had been reading David Livingstone's Journals just before starting, and as I remembered his affectionate testimonials to the natives, their wholesome and invigorating life, their freedom from silly vanity, their toughness and fine working qualities, their naturalness of intercourse—as I remembered what I had read, and how he deplored the change wrought by civilization and the contact with those who were all ulterior motives, I wondered and my companion wondered whether, after all, man gains much with all the intricacies and complications of the busier life.

Suppose you say that the statistics are such and so; that in the backwoods there are illiterates. The truth of that must be admitted, but not with any feeling of scorn for those talked about. For why set mere book-learning on any impossible plane? Why hold the mere reading of a book in the light of a virtue? Why be proud of a mere acquisition of dull facts? For what counts, after all, is not knowledge but character. And a man may have swallowed all of that which school and university offer, yet still be a sorry fellow and poor citizen.

These people, these mountaineers and tamers of the wilderness, these frontiersmen are simple. And kindly. And hospitable. You will not find them indulging in commonplaces, nor in catchwords about flags and frontiers, nor in worn phrases. But know them and you will find them entirely and clearly capable of independence of thought. A lifetime of patient work, of observation, of facing nature in her many moods, of contact with things at first hand, of strict and methodical action—and the result is a sturdy independence and a soundness. Their determination is as was the determination of a Boone, or a Robertson, or a Sevier, or a Bowie. Their unflinching integrity lifts them to zenith high places. Envy they do not know; neither selfishness nor malice.

They are the salt of the earth.

A Joyful River

THE other day I saw a new thing, I should say one among the largest of its kind in the world. It was the source of the Roaring River, in the Missouri Ozarks, not far from the town of Cassville. Leaving the regular trail and going by a little road, we came to the giant spring; after rolling through the long, tree-shaded lane. Leaving the lane we were struck by the matchless dignity of a mighty rock precipice, two hundred feet or more high, splendidly adorned with hanging ferns, and crowned by great trees. And going towards that we saw the river, because it is really not a spring, but a river full grown, pouring out of the earth; boiling rather than pouring, for its speed fifty yards from the spring is sixty miles an hour, as it dashes over a high precipice in a marvelous cascade of spraying beauty. The breadth of it is more than sixty feet, its depth more than ten feet. So you may imagine the grandeur of it all in the heart of that dark forest.

Why people who get up road guide books should miss the mention of so fine a corner of the world puzzles me. But no. They will go on with their silly direct advertising, telling about their banks and their hotels and their garages, as if any of those would attract tourists, and leave quite unmentioned such a natural wonder as this. Sometimes, indeed, the compilers of these guide books act as if they were afraid and suspicious of the joy and beauty of er

Perhaps that's why they stick up huge advertising boards blotting out some scene of contentment, starting in the light-hearted a mental depression. Indeed, I look upon the impudence of advertisers who deface the landscape exactly as I would look upon the impudence of a manufacturer who posted a man with a megaphone in a concert hall with orders to blare out instructions to Buy Blank's Bathtubs during the playing of the softest passage in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

It's the impracticability of the man who loves to call himself practical that makes for such stupidities as calling attention to private businesses and leaving out all mention of salient things. No man but will resent the sight of a mustard colored advertisement tacked to a magnificent oak, when he is struck with admiration while passing some clear stream pleasant with large-leaved water-plants. No man riding through flaming autumn woods will be interested to know that the First National Bank of Yodelburg has \$30,000 capital. No man thrilled and haunted by the ordered vibrations of a perfect working engine will be cheered by the announcement that Rud's Wrecking Establishment is at Phone 666.

Wineland's Place

WE were rolling along towards Joplin, Sizer and Gardner and Galloway and I, when someone remembered that there was a Silver Fox Farm in the neighborhood. So we left the trail and took a side path and presently came to a log house, very neat and comfortable looking, and hailed the owner. He was Wineland, a moving picture man who carried a secret in his heart of which those who paid their dimes to see his pictures never dreamed. His orchestras could not have suspected the marching music of his heart, and here was his dream, made real.

His house stood on a sort of crater. That's how it seemed. Looking down, from his screened porch, you saw the corner of a pool. Then you noticed that what seemed like a crater was a funnel shaped hollow; and down the sides of that hollow, for seventy-five feet went a stairway of stone, fern-fringed, with broad stone stopping places from which it was possible to take in the beauties of landscapes, and hills, and trees. The stairway ended in a square stone pool of crystal clear water, of more than a man's depth, and in that swam great rainbow trout. So to my thinking the moving picture man who had planned and made it all had the soul of a poet. Certainly the main reason for writing a beautiful thing must be for a similar reason. When Dresbach or Marjorie Meeker or Helene Mullins experience the rapture of perceiving a beautiful subject, they com-

plete things by expressing themselves as finely and delicately as possible. They succeed perfectly when they awake in the reader of their poem the sensation they themselves felt. Well, something of the same thing this moving picture man did when he planned and executed in the Ozark hills near Joplin. On what an unimaginative man would have regarded as a dull background, things of beauty outlined themselves radiantly. He saw the possibility of evoking a greater splendor. A fine perception and emotion translated itself into something for the eye. In the case of the poet a fine emotion flowers into words.

His silver fox business seems to be a success, though the initial outlay was evidently great, what with electric lighted dens and underground runs, constantly running water in a dozen places, dog-proof fences and much more. Then the vixens are apt to eat their own young at the least disturbance. So the pups are taken from their mothers and nursed by cats who have been robbed of their own kittens. But it is a great affair, this riding of a hobby, whether it be foxes, or chickens, or dogs, or books and pictures. Happiness implies a working to a goal, an activity. The danger of prosperity is to have gained a height and to be blind to further horizons.

A River Cave

TWELVE miles out from Springfield, Mo., we passed a place known as Sequiota. A very famous fish hatchery is there—in fact there are fish hatcheries in many places in south-west Missouri. Not the fish hatchery but the cave is the notable thing. It is like Fingal's cave in miniature, for the floor of it is water—a river some ten feet wide and from three to six feet deep. You can take a boat and row into it for almost half a mile with the stalactite-hung roof from four to twenty feet overhead, positively the most comfortable cave to explore that I ever saw. Outside was a blazing sun and a steel-blue sky, but in the cave the thermometer stood at sixty. Sitting in the boat there was no motion but the throb of the current, no sound but the soft swishing of the distant water as it came out of some far away spring. It was very pleasant indeed and the only drawback to entire enjoyment was the boatman guide. He was a simple and austere youth with a patch of white over his left cheek, and he occupied his time and beguiled us on the way with a tale of how he suffered from poison ivy, describing with great particularity his sensations when he first found himself afflicted, and instructing us concerning the proper treatment of the malady. Happily he struck his head with some violence against a stalactite in the middle of his discourse, and, seeing that more was to follow, I seized the occasion to tell him

a harrowing tale of the discovery, some twenty-five years ago, of the skeleton of a prehistoric man whose thigh bone, I asserted, lying very volubly, was all of eight feet long.

“So you can figure out for yourself,” I told him, “what the size and the height of the man must have been.”

He sat down to ponder awhile, then named so tremendous a dimension for the man that I myself was staggered. Then: “That is a history I never heard before,” he said, and added that he would bear it in mind and tell all who came that way. So you may see for yourself how strange tales come about.

Note on Eating

ONE of the drawbacks to adventure among the small towns lies in the provender department. Sudden Service Palace of Eats ran the legend on one restaurant window, and as we had been hours without eating we ventured into the place. It was dark and dismal though behind great vacant windows, they being stained with ancient dirt. But hunger forced us to make an assault. The proprietor assured us that his establishment was famed for its culinary excellence, so we ordered oyster soup. But alas, it had the appearance of whitewash and the taste was gritty. Also there was a flavor of gasoline in the butter. Fried chicken was a serious nuisance because it had a pork-like smell. As for the coffee, nothing more abominable ever passed my lips, and when I lamented aloud, the man with a dirty apron spoke bitterly of my impertinent fault finding. Which is the peculiar way of cooks who fall back on some fanciful and silly ritual by which a man is supposed to suffer any violent attack of dyspepsia in silence because of bad cooking, though he may criticize and think aloud about badly made shoes, or indifferently designed shirts. But cooks, by some strange custom, you are supposed to address in a style of rich Eastern allegory, addressing them as Perfume of Paradise and Shadow of Allah of Earth, praising their vilest efforts in terms that would be extravagant if applied to the giver of manna in the wilderness.

But friends and fellow-citizens, let me advise you of an oasis and sanctuary wherein you may gain health and strength after the regimen of small-town restaurants. It is in Springfield, Missouri, and it is called the Kentwood Arms, and at the sight of it my pulse quickened with delight. Nor has this mention the slightest tincture of an advertisement, I would have you observe. The sweet and high-sounding name gives promise that is amply justified. The table attendants do what they have to do without fuss. It is a reputable and fashionable inn with an excellent table.

And speaking of inns, you'll find a refreshing place in the town of Neosho, the Big Spring Inn. It is built on the side of a steep hill by the banks of a clear and swift-running river which flows through the town. The beauty of the place and the quietness would put the grouchiest man in a happy mood. I exulted in the homes that had river back yards. This inn with a balcony struck me particularly. The river through its garden ran with a silver music over a bed of yellow stones, a glory of sunshine played on a riot of roses, five tall poplars stood like foot-fast sentinels over the place. . . . Neosho stands out to me, too, because it was there I essayed my first game of golf, making three holes in seventy-two, which, I am assured, established a record. There are nine holes on the course, but, unfortunately, at the beginning of the fourth I struck a mighty blow, which missed the ball and broke the driver, and the flying head struck my caddy. I explained that it was my first game, and he nodded like one who thoroughly understood but desired to hear no more. Then by some inexplicable caprice he left me.

Utopia In Arkansas

ONCE, I thought that I had found the limit of incongruity. It was years ago, when, on Wellington Island, on the coast of Patagonia, I found on the beach an iron-bound box, and, opening it, discovered a little leather-bound volume, all time-stained and yellowed, and the book was Dryden's *Virgil*. Afterward I went a-sailing with one Bill Potter, a kind of pirate fellow who took up gold-digging, and one day down in Beagle Channel he picked up the *Virgil*, became interested, and read it with every evidence of vast interest.

But that incident as evidence of incongruity is run pretty close by another of quite recent date, and this later one has a flavor of disjointed ends. It brings to mind Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court*, the swamp city in Jeffrey's *After London*, or the classic *New-Zealander* of Macaulay. Idealism and decadence cheek by jowl would be a better way to put it. For once a man named Harvey, prominent in 1896, when sentimentalists and economists were talking about the silver question, made a great deal of money. So, being rich, he set about building a great castle of white stone in the wilds of Arkansas, and the building remains unfinished to this day. There, in a cup of the hills, you see the remains of a vast thing of embrasured towers, of mullioned windows, of arched doorways,

and it has the appearance of a feudal castle in process of demolition. To come upon it suddenly, unexpecting any such thing, is like a vision of Melrose Abbey in the Sahara.

The purpose of the man was stranger than his plan, for his idea was that some day,—to put it exact, twenty-five years from 1896,—an ideal commonwealth would be centered about the castle, and the building itself would house poets and philosophers, inventors and philanthropists, scientists and sages, and a golden age would dawn. It was to be a place of the lit lamp and the girt loin, and because of its influence people were to be lifted out of themselves, were to be imbued with high social ideals, were to have a splendid faith in humanity. Above all, the State of Arkansas was to lead her sister States socially, educationally, and morally.

One evening, in the shadow of that unfinished dream of stone, we two who were tramping the hills made our coffee, and while so doing became unpleasantly aware of a boy with a stony expression of countenance who appeared from nowhere and stood watching us, making a very unpleasant kind of noise by whistling through his teeth. He was a lean, fidgeting kind of lad, as ragged as Huckleberry Finn, and he was full of bovine seriousness. Obviously, we had no right to order him off, for he was not interfering, nor was he meddlesome or actively inquisitive. So, in that kindly, authoritative way in which men talk to strange young people of the countryside, we asked him his name. Perhaps he was a dreaming kind of lad and perhaps he was slow of speech, for a long time elapsed before he made reply. Then he said "By-gee," which for a swift moment we imagined to be

exclamatory until his head, nodding, showed us our error.

"By-gee," repeated my companion, musingly. Then, "How do you spell it?"

"I don't," he answered very seriously, and added by way of afterthought, "but mebbe my uncle knows how."

We hazarded "Abijah" as a possible solution, but the lad, though mildly interested, was unable to aid us; so there followed a little social catechizing. Could he read? He could a little, but did not. Did he attend school? No; and, anyway, school only "kept" for two months a year where he was, and the last teacher quit because a boy beat him up. What did he do for a living? Well, as to that, he just "got by, like the rest." A little berry-picking, a little wood-cutting, and now and then an odd job. And his spare time, of which he seemed to be so richly endowed, what did he do with that? Well, he "jest hung round with the boys." And at that point we found ourselves in a conversational cul-de-sac. On his part, there were some things he wanted to know. Were we "the law"? If not, why did we go afoot? Had we anything to sell or were we walking on a bet? I think that we left him unconvinced of our lack of ulterior motives, and after a long and searching look at us he turned away.

But, like a figure in a Greek tragedy, he had given us a theme, and as we lay under the stars, in the roofless castle, a host of phantoms arose. For, if this lad was no rare specimen, then indeed he represented a danger, a menace, a wandering fire, and not for nothing had Arkansas at last discovered that she stood forty-sixth among the states in order of educational advantage, that her young men were by the

draft test only thirty per cent. efficient, that in her public libraries she had only thirty-seven volumes to every thousand inhabitants. And, alas! for Harvey's dream!

The next day we walked many miles without seeing sign of man until we came to a narrow place where the road fell away, so that it was a mere stone ledge in the living rock of the mountain-side, and we had to crowd and make ourselves small to permit the passage of a horse carrying a man, with a woman riding pillion. They gazed at us without speaking, not even answering our salute; but as soon as we were passed, the weather-beaten pair, all grizzled and toil-bent, drew rein to gaze after us. Then at a bend of the road we overtook a man going the same way as we were, and with him we joined company.

He was tall and spare, and seemed careworn, as indeed did almost every one we met on our walk. High on his shoulders he carried a pack covered with a black and shiny cloth. His gray and sparse beard was forked, like the beard of Chaucer's merchant, his shirt was of checkered blue and very irregularly slashed, and it was evident that his trousers had been devised for a much larger man. On his head was a cap such as golf-players use, a head-covering but little suited for a land of beating sunshine. As old as the hills was his sort, and Piers Plowman might have rubbed shoulders with such a one on the Malvern Hills.

For a short while, after a surly greeting on his part, we walked in silence, and we knew that he was filled with that strange suspicion regarding strangers, harbored by the people of the country-side. Moreover, like the lad of the night before and the

two on horseback, he looked upon us as curiosities, and it is not nice to be regarded as a curiosity. However, the conversational ice being once broken, we got along very well. His talk was a *macédoine* of tautologies and repetitions, and he had "but small gramere"; yet from him we learned many things, for he knew the country-side and its people very well indeed. And, let it be said, there was indubitable evidence, when he turned his face to the one or other of us as he said things, that the mountain folk who operated stills harbored no suspicion toward him.

He was, he told us, on occasion a school-teacher, a preacher, a trader in horses and cattle, a berry-picker, and a farmer; and just then he was venturing into new fields, killing two birds with one stone, and following the dual occupation of rubbing doctor and peripatetic barber. His field was, and always had been, limited, for out of the north-western part of the state he had never been, nor did he wish to go. In his own way he had, as Sir Walter Scott said of his Highlander, "all the good manners that nature can teach."

Little by little, as we walked, he unfolded his philosophy, and we learned that in his view the law was a kind of invading entity, the state a sore oppressor. He was, he told us, a practical man and could see no advantage in government. There were no vital connections between him and the state, nor was there a social organism. Instead, each hamlet and village was a compact little realm, each community a separate commonwealth, and there were, metaphorically speaking, stone walls of separation between village and town, between country and city. He was a man most rootedly individualistic.

"Government!" he said with a note of scorn. "Now, look at this town of Red Star. Them there folks pays taxes. If they don't, then the gov'ment will sell up a wider's cow or pig. A man'll have mercy. A gov'ment don't know none. And what does Red Star get for it all? Nothin'. Nothin' at all. Protection, says you. But protection 'gainst what, I asks? Police? They don't need 'em. Roads? We ain't got none. Then your gov'ment up in Washington gets into war. What then? Down it comes and takes what it wants. Our men go, and the kids and women folk is left to shift as best they can."

Hearing that, we questioned him somewhat closely, dimly suspecting that somehow he had been touched by Edmund Burke or Prince Peter Kropotkine; but there we were at fault. For understanding presently our suspicion, he very roundly denounced many, naming specifically socialists, anarchists, communists, and prohibitionists, and in comminatory ecstasy bundled with them as objectional all northerners, foreigners, lawyers, bankers, and especially those who were born in the neighboring state of Oklahoma; for, as it appeared, two from that state had cheated him in a trade, selling him a wry-necked hog. "Every one from Oklahoma," he said, "is tarred with the same stick."

Of the truth of many things that were new and strange to us he was firmly convinced, nor could argument shake him. Thus he revealed to us the curious fact that "the lay of the Milky Way" showed which would be the direction of the prevailing wind for the space of a lunar month; the position of the horns of the moon foretold wet or dry seasons; when there was a ring about the moon, the number

of stars within the circle indicated the number of weeks of bad weather; to lay the foundation of a house, to build a fence, to shingle a roof, or to plant potatoes in the dark of the moon was to court certain disaster; in the new house of wood, the resin blisters by spontaneous generation developed into *Cimex lectularius*; a newly born child should be shaken by the heels to the end that its liver should properly fall into place. There was much more of it, and he made the positive statement that the stars and the moon were eternal lamps hung out for signs and seasons, and that the theory of evolution was mere folly.

At noon we came to a place where a group of men were squatted on their heels outside a ramshackle store building. The sorry structure was painted in various colors, red and blue predominating, with here and there, as if laid on by an absent-minded painter, stripes of yellow. On the porch, which was propped up with loose bricks, sat three or four men and a fat woman who chewed snuff, and two yards away a sow and her litter lay sunning.

Our traveling companion disengaged his pack, and busied himself setting out on a sawed-off tree-stump a display of little bottles filled with liquids of various colors, red and blue, green and golden, which, he said, were toilet waters and headache tonics. To those on the porch he recounted his experiences as a pain-and-trouble reliever, but his best trade seemed to be in vanilla extract, sold in little flat bottles, for that is by way of being the local substitute for Burgundy. So, seeing him busy, I went into the store to buy some cheese.

At first, in that place, after one had grown ac-

customed to the darkness, the eye was shocked with the tangle, for there was neither attempt at classification nor apparent desire for order. On a box close to the door slabs of bacon were piled, and a cat with kittens was asleep on a sack thrown over the topmost piece. The shelves were packed with things canned, bottled, tied in bundles, hidden in torn cartons, or stuffed into little chance spaces where they stood or stuck precariously. The filthy counter was littered with a heterogeneous collection: a great cheese, with a wedge cut from it; a dirty pair of scales; a glass case, the top of which was broken, containing a higgledy-piggledy of cheap candy, much fly-specked; part of the carcass of a freshly killed hog, blood-clotted and hideous; an open box of crackers; and, at the farthest end, a little cash-register, with an open Bible atop. The floor was black with ancient filth, and in the middle of it was a stove white powdered with the winter ashes.

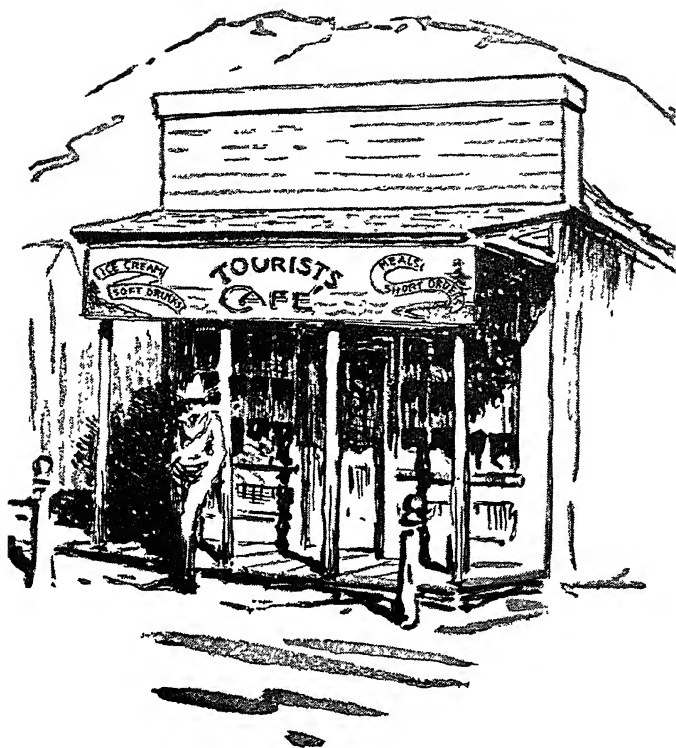
A few men and lads were lounging, talking, one telling a story amid an obbligo of remarks. He was foul-mouthed and licentious and malicious. To be sure, he held his tongue a moment or two when a girl came into exchange eggs for crackers, but she was barely out of earshot before he launched a piece of nastiness that was greeted with squealings. I say squealings, for it was that; not Rabelaisian laughter, but mean squealings, tee-heeings, hyena-like cachinnations.

But, after all, I did not buy the cheese, for just as the storekeeper was about to attend, he was called outside by a man who was lifting a part of a newly butchered hog, evidently the other half of that which lay on the counter, on to a wagon. Having done

this service with perfect good humor, he came again to us, ready to weigh out the cheese. But I perceived that he had not washed his hands; wherefore the prospective trade fell through.

We saw, on leaving that place, that our traveling companion was too busy to notice our departure save by the briefest of nods, for he was selling a bottle of greenish hair tonic to a countryman who sought something to cure his wife's headache, and the contents of that bottle the brisk man spiritedly recommended. So we went our way.

Now, as it happens, in the country through which we passed there was much of natural beauty everywhere: richly wooded mountains and sweeping valleys with precipitous sides; narrow roads under expanding roofs of mighty oaks; rutted paths that skirted sheer cliffs; purple mountain masses against turquoise skies and exquisite afterglows of rare sunsets. But what rests in my mind is the memory of men met and of faces seen on the way. There were others we met of whom I might tell, blighted men and women who seemed never to have known youth, but only toil; people lost in solitary wilderness, like the lonely ones of Chaucer. But, then, perhaps it were idle to tell more, for the world is full of those who dare not be other than they are.



Backhill Italy and a Cave

WE saw things in the Ozark country of the kind which stand out in memory to become part of one's life. There was Tontitown for example. No man interested in sociological matters should miss that place if he is in the neighborhood. It is a corner of Italy transplanted, and by it you may gather something of what transplantation may mean. For the experiment has succeeded in every way, quite as well as a similar experiment made in 1837, when almost a whole village of people moved from Lake Bala in Wales, to Chuput in the Argentine.

Tontitown's population, its industries, its social atmosphere are all strongly charged with a flavor of Italy. For, some decades ago, there was a good priest who bought a parcel of land in a warm fold of the hills, then took his flock to settle there.

All went to work in the way they had been used, planting and tending vineyards and making wine, though the last they had to give up; but they turned to the making of vinegar and grape juice.

So now, everywhere in that vicinity, you see long straight lines of rich massed foliage, and countless clusters of dark grapes, a glory of color when the sun strikes the valley at dawn. As for the people, as I have said, they are Italian, but with something added and with something lost. Of the sunny idleness of their forefathers they know nothing. Nor are they over-vociferous in the manner of their countrymen

who live in Calabria. Something, it may be climate, or it may be economic conditions, or perhaps it is due to different ideals, or maybe to experience, but something has made a change some time. That vivacity which you expect to find in Italians is not in them.

They are a quietly energetic people, full of self-respect. And they still have the agreeable cordiality of Southern Italy. But, I think that to some extent they have lost their native love of color; also something of their original delight in music. And certainly they have not that individuality in the home and its appointments which you expect to find in Italians.

Then there is Eureka Springs which stands out well in memory as a very un-American-looking town. It is built on a mountain side, therefore it is a place of crooked and narrow streets. There are grottoes and rockeries; and there are winding ways from which you look down upon house roofs; and you find unexpected paths which lead to unexpected steps, those in their turn leading to unlooked-for streets on levels high above the streets you have left.

It is a clean town, an oddly interesting town, a town of gardens riotous with flowers. And being there, if you are fortunate, you may discover a potter, a handicraftsman of taste as well as skill, who will fashion a vase for you, a well-proportioned piece, making it out of the native clay which is strangely stratified blue and gray and red and white and yellow. But if, instead of going to the potter, you should follow the high road which twists and turns, you will soon find yourself in a climbing valley which leads to a plateau. From that, you may see, far off,

the long line of the Boston Mountains, often shrouded in a delicate mist. So Eureka Springs seems to stand like a gateway leading to what is beyond.

But the quaintness of the town may hold a certain drawback, if what a blacksmith's boy told us was true. For he said that because of the nature of the streets and the hilliness of the country round about the place, no circus had ever been there, nor was likely to get there. He went on to emphasize his opinion of his forefathers who had chosen so unpromising a site for a town, all the while quite unmindful of, or quite indifferent to what the mineral springs may mean to honest men who have been careless or injudicious in their diet. However, things balance themselves. For while the lad had a fine and equal disregard of indigestion as well as of wealth, there are people owning property in the town who affirm that in the whole wide world there are no waters with the curative properties of the springs about Eureka, an opinion which may well be born of excessive civic pride, if not of economic interest.

To get back to our journey. We crossed the plateau, and between noon and sundown found the town of Jasper, in the heart of the mountains. I say town, but it is really a village, although a county seat, yet for all its primitive smallness a place to give infinite joy to anyone pleased to accept things as they are, and who does not foolishly look for city things where things of the city should not be. For there are such folk who try to arouse that sort of laughter which is like the crackling of thorns under a pot, saying silly and thoughtless things about country places, scoffing and deriding to display their nimbleness of wit. Yet, to put the shoe on the other

foot, all the world would call a man a lunatic who made merry because there were not village pumps, or buggies, or plows to be seen in a city.

Jasper is Jasper, unpretending, caring little what lies beyond the hill or across the river, standing itself four-square. It is a frontier settlement much as Ozona was when Crockett County, Texas, formed part of the Wild West; or as Ely, Nevada, was before that destroying and short-lived gold rush. It is a place without history and without fame, but by no means without interest. The spirit of accumulation is not in its people. They have not been swept into a cataract of expense for things they can do without.

The river is Jasper's waterworks. The town has no electric light plant. If you send a telegram there, the message must be relayed from a distant town over country telephone wires, and it may be, as it was in our case, that if you are bound there you will arrive before your message. No railroad touches the town. If you would go to it from a certain direction you must ride on horseback. There is neither amusement park nor motion picture theater. If you opened a locksmith's shop, as a means of livelihood, you might find that your business largely left your mind free for higher things; for its people are honest and trustful, leaving their doors unlocked when they go out. Nor are men overmuch given to what are called "businesslike" qualities. For instance, consider the inn. Its keeper greets you as if you were a personal friend, invites you cordially to the homely comforts of his house, remembers you and calls you by name if you have been his guest before, will entertain you by the stove-side telling of the destinies of the place.

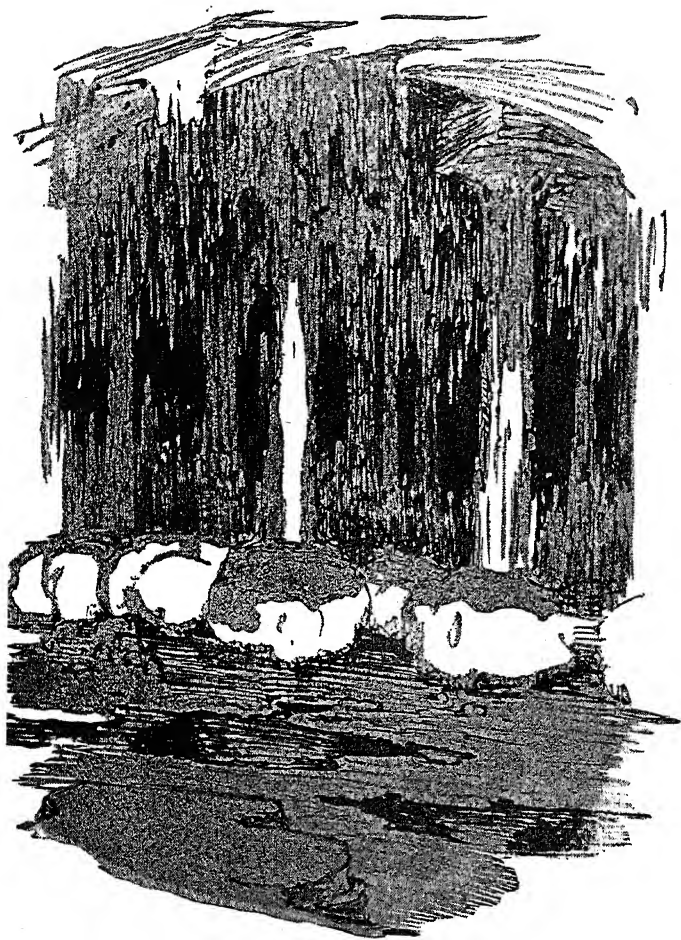
As for other things which struck me as being in-

teresting, there are these, among many. The art of bread-making is still known to women, and the bread has flavor. The butter is home-made, and is rich and creamy and delicate. At evening and early morning you may hear the soft tinkle of cowbells as the animals dawdle and loiter on their way to the milking place. And when a man has a notion to paint a sign for his business house, he sets to work boldly and spiritedly, giving his fancy free rein, quite careless of critics of art, doing what he has a mind to do with an abundance of detail. One such sign Honoré and I looked at with great interest. It was inspiring and imaginative and unaffected, boldly done in strong colors.

Jasper, I hold, is a pleasant place in which to stay awhile; pleasant because restful; pleasant because its folk are full of contentment and live lives which are not to be hurried through as if existence were a service of special express trains. Questions of state, of political factions, of commercial crises, these do not much interest them. But questions of loyalty, and of fidelity to friends and neighbors, these occupy them, and very strongly. The welfare of one is the happiness of all. The loss of one is the grief of all. And he would be a fool who went to them with an idea of exercising influence or of molding opinion. As for the small change of conversation, the sale of a horse or a cow, the late arrival of the stage, the state of the roads, the health of an ailing neighbor, the daily happenings at the cave—these are entirely sufficient.

I spoke of the cave.

There are many caves in the Ozark country, some well known, some partly known, some which remain



to be explored. This particular cave is four miles from Jasper. Long ago, someone named it the Diamond Cave, and the name has been retained in spite of its unsuitability. For the word "diamond" connotes hardness, and brilliancy, and durability, among other things; but the cave does not suggest those qualities. Better, I think, would have been the name Alabaster cave; for alabaster it is, a glory of Oriental alabaster.

There are halls and passages of translucent mineral, sometimes like onyx so that you think of an Arab mosque. Other passages are yellowish milky in color; others again are orange-hued, like sardonyx. There are tall pillars which seem like ivory touched by moonlight. There is the softness of wet snow. There is pearl and there is mother-of-pearl. Or you get glimpses of crystal efflorescence against walls of cadaverous white. Or at a turn you seem to be in a vast and gloomy cathedral built from an apocalyptic dream, in which faintly luminous wraiths peer at you from shadows. Or you are in some legendary palace where fantastically beautiful pendants have the white softness of satin, where from ceilings hang fringes which are almost iridescent when the light strikes high.

At such times the whole cave appears to have the texture of tapestry. But never, never, never is there a sense of hardness, and surely the word "diamond" prefigures that. Neither is there any flashing brilliancy, for the tone is one of subdued harmonies. As for durability, you do not have the feel of it. There are hangings like tremulous draperies. There are formations like lace-work, like molded wax, like suspended lusters which might vanish with a wind.

And in the massing of lights and darks you have a sense of arrested flow—as if, suddenly, all that dripping and dropping, and flowing and gliding, and pushing and sliding had ceased, momentarily, for your inspection. But you do not feel durability. Rather it seems as though, when you turned to leave the place, the movement of the ages would go on; as if all that enameled panorama had slid out of bitumen and black, paused for an instant, then, unseen, would go gliding into gloom from everlasting to everlasting.

My first impression in the cave was a sense of overhanging calamity. In places over which we passed there were great rocks, many tons in weight, which had fallen from the overhead blackness. Looking up where the roof was lower, I saw other rocks quite as mighty, apparently insecurely lodged. So there came fear. But that fear fled when I saw stalagmites a foot and more in height on the fallen rocks, for by those it was evident that the roof had fallen long before Leif the Lucky saw Vinland.

But swiftly a new terror shot into my mind. For the passage of time must have brought nearer that moment when other rocks would come down. What if that moment should be now? In spite of myself, my mind conjured up the crashing down of vast stones, the dislodgment of others, a thundering avalanche! Then black darkness; and blind groping trying to find a way out. And strange things felt and heard. Blood-chilling ululations and roarings. Perhaps monstrous living creatures. For tradition has it that the cave is twenty miles long—is forty miles—is a hundred miles! Some have said that it is endless, and winds about and about forever, down into the bowels

of the earth where are swift and black rivers; down to silent, moveless seas. The truth is that the passages reach a length of less than five miles.

Our guide told us that, and he had the appearance of a direct and truthful man, and all that he said to us we found to be true. What is more, he struck us as being a giant of capability in his way, as indeed he had to be, having spent the best part of fifteen years of his life in that underground place. So his massed knowledge was something to wonder at. He could point to a broken stalactite and tell a tale of some vandal. He knew the different depths of the cave river, to an inch. He had made experiments in petrification and showed us things which he had watched for years, and warned us against touching, lest his experiment be marred.

Deep in the cave he pointed out to us a stalactite about the thickness of a man's arm, which had been somehow broken off. But depending from the broken piece was a new growth, the size of a lead pencil, but very much longer. What, he asked, could have broken the great piece? A man? Certainly not. The smaller stalactite showed that the break had occurred many, many thousands of years ago. A wandering animal from the outside? No known animal could have found a way there along those passages, about that labyrinth and along the narrow way through which we had to wriggle, prone. A blundering bat? No bat was heavy enough, or had force enough in its flight. Earth pressure? But the stalactite had not touched its stalagmite when it broke; besides, why was only that one broken? Then, like a wise man, he left us wondering, stating the problem but offering neither solution nor guess.

At another time he spoke of cave life, so I pricked up my ears, having explored there before with the entomologist Baerg, at which time we came to the conclusion that no life existed down there, but the guide said that he knew of "a white kind of lizard, deadly poison," and also "a white kind of bug," both far in the recesses of the cave. He gave a swift description, then drifted into his usual talk, calling attention to fanciful figures, telling what someone had said, offering statistics.

But an hour or so later we came to a pool, one so dark and still that it was hard to believe that water was there. The cave man stooped, pointed, flashed his light, and we bent, peering closely. And, sure enough, there at the bottom of the pond was the creature; a salamander, agile and etiolated. So again multitudes of questions presented themselves. Upon what could such creatures subsist? Did they devour each other? As for the "bugs," they were white and wingless, he said, with long legs. Then he went on, talking as he walked, largely about "scientific doctors" who wanted to persuade him to capture the creatures so that "they could pull 'em to pieces," which he considered an aim wholly absurd. To such, if he suspected them, he would show neither salamander nor insect, and he alone knew where they lay hid. So I believe that the character he gave his salamander when he said it was poisonous was rather in the nature of protection for his pet.

Thus ended our cave exploration. We went underground in the light of late afternoon, and came out between nine and ten at night. Out of that white stillness we climbed, to find ourselves in a beating rain. But it was good to take deep breaths, to feel the

sharp sting of wind and water on the face. The world, with its energy and joyfulness, its ardor and its genial fellowship, struck us as being a sweet and desirable place.

There are other worlds than ours where sunshine and rain are non-existent and no flowers grow, but in which we need not dwell. In this thought there is comfort.

It came upon me to realize that it is good to be alive.

En route Tulsa

BECAUSE I enjoyed an auto stage across south Michigan so much, I went to Tulsa from Fayetteville in a stage, thinking to see things in a new and pleasant way. But if the Michigan ride was like one of those described by Dickens, riding in a stage coach from Bristol to London, the trip from Fayetteville to Tulsa was like one of those wrenching rides referred to by Pepys. Normally the trip takes five hours. We were from 2 p. m. until 10 p. m. on the road. If you have read old John Lambert's book of travels in the United States in 1810, or Melish's travels in the same period, you get a fine idea of how things were. Or perhaps you know of Thomas Twinning's Travels. If so, you recall his passage telling that "the disposal of the luggage was extremely incommodious, not only to the owner, but to his neighbors." So it was in this case. At one time we had ten human beings packed in a machine built to accommodate seven—women and children and men and babies, each woman with bags and grips, each child carrying marginal things so to speak, each man with his grips: and the bundles were placed, and piled, and wedged, and balanced, so that it became impossible to move leg or foot. At wayside stops there was a mighty unpacking before passengers could alight. It was like getting dunnage loose before cargo could be taken from a hold.

The route was cross-country, and there had been

days of rain. So there were washed-out places, and stretches where the surface had been lost, while to pass another auto became a breathless experience. Late in the day a fog fell, so we went for hours through yellow air, the headlights making the feeblest light, mud and water splashing the car, the wind shield a detriment rather than a help. But the lad driving was alert and well on to his job. And yet, think of it! He had left Tulsa that morning at 7 A. M., reached Fayetteville at 2 P. M., then started back again without eating or resting, and was on his job until 10:00 P. M. Fifteen hours' steady work on a job requiring unceasing vigilance, heavy sweating toil in the mud when a blowout occurred, collecting fares, looking after baggage, forced to put up with I know not what from his passengers in the way of questions and complainings, seeing to his oil and gasoline! It was not that way on the Michigan stage. There two lads took turn about, each running his hundred miles while the other rested.

What I would emphasize is this. By a sort of illusion we look about us and talk of a universal eight-hour day, but overlook the fact that there are hundreds of thousands of men still working as hard as ever men worked. Again, in the case of steam railroads and electric railways, we hedge things about with all kinds of restrictions and laws, full crews, printed schedules, safety appliances, crossing signals, block systems, fenced rights of ways—and, remembering, pride ourselves upon our ordered control; yet on the public highway each does pretty much as he pleases and everything is left to the individual initiative. True, highway travel in autos is in its infancy out here, in this section of the coun-

try, and presently things will fall into shape as they have in the east and north. But meanwhile, the pioneers in the game are doing difficult things. The lad who ran the cross-country car was in his early twenties, of no schooling, and who had no opportunity. He had worked, he told me, since he was twelve. But there was a fine kind of natural breeding about him. Given a problem, as passing a dangerous place, or meeting a car in a tight run, or encountering an unexpected obstacle, there was no helpless floundering, but swift action, directness, sharp scrutiny. He decided off-hand.

By some silly sentimentalism, we have set the locomotive engineer on a high pedestal as a man doing his duty under strain. But compare him with the driver of a public automobile. The man on the locomotive has child's play. A thousand problems confront the auto driver for one confronting the engineer. One had to act on his own initiative—the other had only to follow orders and observe signals. One must decide at a flash of thought, while the other had the unexpected only rarely. One is alone on his job, the other has a crew to help him. One cuts loose from his base, the other is in touch with an army of assistants. I invite your attention to the chauffeur as one of the significant figures of our day.

A Boat Trip

WITH two of my boys and one of their friends, I took a boat trip of a hundred and twenty-five miles on the James River in southern Missouri. On the map it is charted as a mere thread, like some of those twisted lines representing rivers that you may see in maps of New Mexico and of west Texas, which, when you discover, turn out to be nothing more than dry gullies and arroyos, so that when you come upon them after a day's ride and find no water for man or beast, you curse all map makers and stand awhile in solitary enjoyment of the anathemas you heap on the heads of all boosters and patriotic liars who make things appear otherwise than as they are. For there are, in this nation of ours, those who seek to multiply their own happiness and fatten their own purses at the expense of others.

The James River is a defiant-looking, blustering little river that snatches your boat as soon as it is launched, to whip it into a tumbling cataract before you are ready with your oars. It is an eager, impatient kind of river that hurries, rushing and thrusting, through mountain valleys. It tumbles headlong down rocky slopes in thundering cataracts while Puritan pines look on in solemn wonderment. It sweeps swiftly past fern-hung caves, past high hills fantastically worn into towers and castles, past park-like glades and sun-spangled meadows, always roaring, always fussing, in a tremendous hurry and

flurry to find cool cañons where cranes stand on stilt-like legs and where emerald kingfishers perch pensively by heavy pools overhung with willows and sycamores. It is a grotesquely active river that gets to its destination in a roundabout way, sometimes almost returning on its course as if in a spirit of self-examination, sometimes darting off on an unexpected run quite capriciously, in one place rushing through a narrow way between gray rocks to drag a placid lake from its veteran retirement. It is a laughing youth of a river, a youth stripped for the race, bubbling over with energy, all eager for the untravelled world as a place of banners and brave music and flashing swords. And all too soon that youthful joyousness passes and the shade of the prison house appears. For at Branson commercialism yawns and the river is clean and pure no more. Golden youth has passed and there is left nothing but the seriousness of middle age. That abundant good humor and bubbling exhilaration vanishes and the river becomes a dull and sobered thing, stagnant and lusterless, bearing the burden of petty things and frivolous, of fussy motor boats, of noisy pleasure steamers and puffy and pompous houseboats ridiculous in their self-importance. The tall trees vanish and where they once stood are frankfurter stands, drinking stalls, ten-cent dancing halls, cheap shows, things tawdry and vulgar that invite to foolish wastefulness. So the romantic gives way to the common-place, natural beauty is no more, and the name of the river is on the lips of fools.

As to the crew, there was Jack Appleby, a college boy interested in French and Spanish, who in some mysterious manner soon slipped from a neatly

dressed youth into the semblance of an amateur tramp, his clothes muddy, his shoes unlaced, his chest so sunburned that he could not button his shirt; there was Hubert who is interested in chemistry, square shouldered and brown skinned, using his voice as if his conversation was addressed to a man half a mile away, spending his energy in a roaring kind of way; there was Charles Jr., very hefty, a sort of smile always ready, very direct, very keen, active of bearing, in full ownership of himself, a lad with the frame of a pugilist.

It was good to see the lads rowing, good to see them coming naked from the swirling river like water gods, good to see them when we camped at night, looking into the merriment of the fire. And there were plenty of light-hearted laughter and high-spirited talk all day and every day, and when provisions ran short, as they did too early in the voyage, empty bellies became part of the adventure, though to be sure, a certain gravity fell upon us all facing a supperless night. But short commons entailed long foraging trips; meant the climbing out of cañons, the tramping of high and long hills hunting for houses in search of eggs, for we had not gone on the trip prepared to fish. Sometimes we came back empty handed, for folk living thereabouts were often so poor as to have nothing to sell. Bread they seldom tasted, meat almost never. Indeed talk as you will about the American standard of living, I know that many a peasant in the Balkans, many a landless Mexican, many a Galway fisherman is no poorer than your farm renter may be. And so long as man is divorced from the land that God gave him, so long must preventable ills continue. Consider. What have

such as these in the way of enjoyment, of intellectual nourishment? What have they in the way of hope? For their clothing is nothing more than a suit of cheap and worn overalls and an old straw hat. For dwelling they have a wretched shack that they do not own, a thing in which a city man would not house a dog, it lacking protection from the heat of the sun as well as from the cold of winter. Seeing these things and more one wonders at the prevalence of the superstition that would have us believe that with patience and industry a measure of comfort will be assured. For such is not the case, and in this land of gold and of business and of smug self-complacency there are tens of thousands in the back lands who never knew and probably will never know anything in life but sordid want, in spite of their industry, their frugality and their perseverance.

One evening we came to a place where a community picnic was in progress, and doubtless a whole village had turned out. The sun had gone down but everything was going in full blast. Boys were blowing whistles and squeak balloons, a patent medicine man was bawling out the virtue of his wares, and in a lamp-lit tent an old-time fiddler was scraping and calling directions to the dancers most lustily. And, of course, the bootlegger was there. Of that there were indubitable evidences. We camped across the river, for a cataract or two in a narrow gorge was ahead which it was not wise to navigate in the dark, but the noise and racket of the picnic meant nothing to us, tired with the day's travel. Next morning, before the sun had scattered the mists, we were on our way again.

IMPRESSIONS AND SKETCHES

Free Fantasia on Missouri

SO careless are boosters in many cases, that they will go on telling about the industries of states and towns, telling about churches and schools and waterworks, never discovering that in so doing they are guilty of a kind of reflex egoism, much as though they had talked about their own occupations, and about how they owned typewriting machines and cash registers. For business is business, whether public or private, and certainly industry is a duty and a sheer necessity, but hardly to be called a virtue. As for the ordinary machinery of commerce and civilization, for schools and churches like typewriters and delivery trucks are necessary tools, why boast of possessing them? They should be taken for granted, exactly as knives and forks and spoons are in any decent household. But the careless booster goes on and on, telling of things that may be learned from any encyclopedia, making a dreary human signboard of himself, and, like a wayside signboard, hiding the scenery and the character of the country, or else being entirely ignorant of it.

Here is an instance of the wrongful activity of the booster who does not realize that what most of us are interested in is the very nature and feel of the country—its character, in a word. One day some of us were sitting in the Hotel Mayfair in St. Louis, listening to Opie Read, whose conversation was a

happy chapter of literary chronicles, plentifully besprinkled with old-fashioned oaths. There were, in the party, Stuart P. Sherman, Carl Sandburg, Robertus Love who wrote a history of Jesse James, and also a pushful young English novelist named Frankau who entertained a high opinion of himself. Suddenly there swung in a very breezy and bustling man. He was very well dressed in a flashy kind of way, and with a curious zeal he assured us that he was glad to meet us because we could put Missouri before the world in her true light. Opie of The Jucklins paused in what he had been saying while the stranger introduced himself, then went on with his naming of the jewels in Missouri's crown. He named such names as Mark Twain, and Herbert S. Hadley, and Jim Reed, besides many now on the road to fame who had been discovered by William Marion Reedy such as Zoe Akins, and Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Edgar Lee Masters, and the artist Bloch, and others whose names escape me. "Missouri has nothing to be ashamed of in the literary field," said Opie.

Then it was that the bustling man waved his arm, switched on a battery of information, stepped on his rhetorical gas and went full speed ahead. "Missouri!" he exclaimed. "Lemme tell you about her. Nothing like her in these here states." And never shall I forget the sadness that came over us as he went on, not only holding us with his glittering eye, but also hooking a detaining finger into our coats at the least sign of impatience. He told us about Missouri's farming and stock raising, then he gave us much information about the number of bushels of

peaches and grapes and cherries and potatoes sweet and Irish that were raised annually. It was all very true and very impressive, and he flung vast statistics in our faces in the manner of a lecturer of economics, doing it all so gallantly and well that we were amazed at his gift of memory for figures. Strongly, ably, volubly he went on to talk about Missouri's geology and mining, plunging headlong into a mass of facts about the production of mines of coal and iron and lead and zincs. He gave us very minute information about the manufacture of boots and shoes, of clothing, of confectionery, of street and railroad cars, of tobacco. And one by one, with sickening treachery, my companions slipped away, while he went on and on, unperturbed, marshaling his figures with indefatigable skill and talking of Missouri banks and their capital stock, of the estimated value of school property, of the assessed valuation of the state, of miles and tonnage connected with railroads. And all of that information fell on my brain with sledge-hammer blows so that I became dazed and gazed at him spell-bound as gazed the wedding-guest at the Ancient Mariner. Suddenly he ended by telling me that the attention I had given him was a good augury for the future of the state. "And now you catch on," he said, in a kind of confidential undertone. "Now you've got a picture of Missouri."

I had. But it was an impression as of an enormous tract of factories; of metallic clangor; of cities crowded with excited, energetic people. It was a confused picture of men plowing fields, men chasing mules, men driving animals to the slaughter-houses and stock-yards. I saw Missouri as a place of gray

business affairs bordering on a vast yellow flood that was the Mississippi. I saw it as a place of barbed-wire fences, and silos, and barns, and banks, and ditches, and corrugated-roofed sheds—but I did not see it as I now know a great part of it to be, that is a pleasant place for any man whose aim is to get away from the endless circumstances of everyday existence for awhile. I did not see it as a place in which a man might make a comfortable home. As to the state being full of natural wonders, if the booster knew that he kept the information to himself. And if the St. Louisians knew of the existence of beauty spots in the Missouri Ozarks, they certainly seemed to be in a conspiracy to keep the knowledge a dark secret from their friends. Yet there are wonder spots and beauty spots to be reached with ease in an auto.

Consider.

For the whole of one day, for the greater part of a night and for the whole of a second day, I, with my three sons, were swept down a tumbling river in Missouri territory, and during all that time we did not see four living beings. For seclusion we might have been on the upper reaches of the Niger. For adventure we might have been on the Green River in Wyoming. For beauty to compare with what we saw we might have searched the Berkshires, and the Adirondacks, and Killarney. We shot rapid after rapid. Sometimes we bumped on hidden rocks. Sometimes we were capsized and forced to swim. And always we had to keep a sharp lookout for landing places, marking them speedily and making for them energetically because of the swiftness of the current. Nor were those landing places very numerous at

times because the river sped through a cañon the sides of which were cliffs two and three hundred feet in height, perpendicular and forbidding, and against the base of them the waters dashed in white foam. And yet the beginning of our boat adventure was at the little town of Galena on the James River, a run of a few hours from St. Louis. You take the road to Springfield, then go south-west into Stone County which I believe has no railroad. So while you may leave the city roar at eight in the morning, in early afternoon you may launch your boat and give yourself to the strong tide, then be swept into a solitary valley which is much as it was a thousand years ago.

What is also interesting is this. On the way from St. Louis to Springfield you cross the land of the Gasconade, which I would dare say is one of the healthiest spots in the world. At any rate the people living there radiate health. In one place the road slowly ascends until it sweeps along the crest of a hill. It was early morning when I found myself there and a white mist hid the river at times, but as the sun climbed higher the white clouds became rose tinted and then vanished. Then it was that the River Gasconade took on a strange emerald beauty as it wound through green woods. The hills were checkered with shadow and sun, and through openings in the trees that lined the road I saw glory after glory in flashing pictures of a patch of red-gold wheat, of a quiet meadow, of a flower-dressed hill, of a cliff all scarlet and brown, of a great amphi-theater where sheep grazed, of little lakes framed in graceful boughs. You might search the world over and find no more beautiful spot, nor healthier. Nor has any malevolent

advertiser ruined the place with hideous sign-board. Small wonder that Stuart Olivier, riding through the country and finding it gratify some desire within him, left his Baltimore and his Broadway and invested three quarters of a million in a Springfield newspaper! Small wonder that Fielding P. Sizer, worried with the friction of a hundred legal interests, finds fresh vigor of soul in his Ozark town of Monett, occupying himself with such things as the making of a public library, the creation of a public park, the turning of waste places into playgrounds! Small wonder again that William Marion Reedy refused offers that would take him away from the hills and rivers of his native state!

And to think that the booster knew nothing, or if he knew told us nothing of all that, but went on with his talk of commercial activities, disregarding the fact that men are commercially active everywhere. For all of us would have been far more interested in knowing about Roaring River than about the number of passengers who went in and out of the Union Depot annually. Because Roaring River is a wonder of the world. I have seen a hundred and more river sources, but never one such as this, though I hesitate to tell about it for fear that the water-power men who have slowed Niagara might seize upon it. Imagine a river flowing out of a rock at a speed of six miles an hour. Picture that river as being sixty feet wide and ten feet deep, the water of delicate coloring because of the blue of the sky and the rich-hued foliage of the hills and the play of light and shade. Out over clean white and yellow sand the water flows, out and down the valley, its banks

lined with poplars and maples and sycamores and willows, the hills beyond covered with pines and firs. Imagine the air sweet with the subtle perfume of a thousand mountain shrubs and flowers, and the drowsy music of bees and babbling waters. Then you have a hint of Roaring River.

Or suppose the booster had told us of the great cave which is not far from Springfield? It reminded me of Fingal's Cave in Scotland because I explored it in a boat. It is like the approach to a world of spirits to enter it, what with the pushing on stalactites to move the boat along the river, the silence and coolness of it, its gloom and mystery. As you twist and turn the golden radiance of the world vanishes to a mere speck, and all that is to be heard is the distant gurgle of waters and the faint sound of tiny rivulets that come from the rock. At one place I heard a queer sound like the steady beating of hidden machinery, very regular, very strange and mysterious. From time to time I stopped to listen but without discovering any change in character in the sound, and at last, in the silence of the cave the noise became almost painful, the more so because I could not assign any cause for it. Presently, when I thrust out my left hand I felt something hard and cold and wet like a rigid enormous snake, and exploring by touch I found that the thing ran perpendicularly. So I struck a match after several attempts and the mystery was a mystery no longer. It was a four-inch pipe, and as I grasped it I felt the vibration of the pump-plunger. For eighty feet above my head there was a farm, and sometime the owner of it had drilled

a well that went down and down, piercing the cave roof and entering the cave river.

I could tell of many other things seen in Missouri: of a man who has made an estate out of a hill-side, with under-ground runs for silver foxes, and a lake and fountain; of a town called Neosho where people have a little river running along the ends of their lawns and gardens; or orchards thick hung with fruit; of places where nature strikes a sterner, grander note. But what puzzles me is why anyone should be foolish enough to think that anything could be known of Missouri when only its commercial activities were told of, and all of that which I have so lightly referred to and more was left out.

Let me assure you that the Missouri Ozarks is an ideal country in which to ramble and idle. It is a good place in which to rest and loiter and drowse. In its shadowed stillness a man may think. Some day I hope to write a guide book about it to the end that Missourians shall know their Missouri. It is a land worth knowing.

Christmas

“**L**OOK out for cold spell” the local paper warned, and the warning was justified. There came frost and snow last night, though today the sun is shining bright and warm and the scantily leaved trees are a wonder and a glory. At six in the morning the porch was fringed with crystal hangings which were ruby tinted at sunrise, and at the time I was drinking my morning coffee, the whole snow-covered valley and the hills beyond, were rose flushed. At half past eight, when I went to my forest office, the thermometer stood at one below zero and the snow was six inches deep and lightly frost crusted.

Because of the warning, the boys had put the horses, sheep and cows in the barn lot, and had thrown down a plentiful supply of hay. So as I passed the corral there was a symphony of soft munching. A little further on, where the barred-rocks are, there were protesting noises and indignant cluckings and sounds of feminine combat in the poultry world, doubtless of wide-spread discontent at the unreasonable and unjustifiable conduct of man in keeping the pen doors closed and thus infringing that liberty which is the birthright of every well-conducted hen. I heard a rooster holding forth, and I do not doubt but that he was calling upon bold hearts to rebel and follow him to freedom where light and beauty could reign triumphant. There was a brave-to-the-death ring in his voice. He sang the song the morning sings.

In the office I cannot avoid looking up to a little window. There, framed in the square is a picture more gaudy glittering than Aladdin's cave or Fortunatus' chests. The twigs of the trees are crystal cased, and as the sun strikes them they flash into a thousand little lights and ten thousand hues. It is a tree hung with pearls and diamonds and emeralds. It is a polychromatic glory and a wonder of wonders. It is a new stellar universe. One star blazes warmly red like Aldebaran. Close to it is a constellation flashing orange and blue and emerald and pink. Then there is a fairy-fire of green, some far-off nebulae, and beyond it a glory of living purple and further still a scintillating violet. A million tiny crystals shine and glow. It is a radiant realm of starry hosts.

Through another window I see a tree-clad slope, and there the snow is delicate light-blue with tree-shadows of violet, the leaves pale-gold. At the top of the rise, like a fabric stretched, is a network of laced limbs all diamond spangled, against a gray-blue sky, the topmost edge of it shining with golden light.

The world seems to sleep, for there is rarely a sound apart from the ticking of the clock and the occasional tapping of some enterprising bird which has found shelter on a shelf on the porch behind a pile of magazines. Sometimes I hear a distant cock-crow, probably the battle song of that trumpet-throated champion. Very rarely, if I listen intently, I catch a faint silvery tinkle as some icicle shatters.

Yet only yesterday it was a day to set the earth singing on its way to new life. Some of the household were out in the flower garden at work with engrossing things. The children were playing jacks on the door-

step. There was a faint glimmering of early grass and the sheep had found interest in a distant part of the pasture. Walking over the little bridge on my office path, I looked down into the clear water to see signs of life. I heard birds too, many of them, chirping and piping in the trees. The Carolina wren, the robin, the meadow-lark and the cardinal were merrily noisy. The mocking bird was busily fluttering, but silent as a Trappist monk. So genial it was that towards mid-afternoon I had an idea to sit on the porch and write, for it was white sunshine there.

We have had a winter mild and pleasant, generally cool enough for a fire during the day, always cold enough at night for blazing logs. The children make a pleasant business of those fireside evenings and there are mild complaints and expressed regrets when the clock chimes half past eight, bed-time for Helen and Ann and Herbert, who wake again at six and are generally lively half an hour later, their breakfasts done, neat and trim for school.

For them, and no less for the older ones, we had the usual Christmas tree, and it was a glorious one. Hubert and Charles went to the woods for it, mounted it in the library, and it was all of nine feet high and eight of spread.

There has grown up a kind of ritual about the tree, with the years. It is always dressed and decorated by the adults, some family friend reputed to have a special aptitude for that kind of thing helping, and the juniors do not see it in its Pactolian glory until Christmas morning, though each one of the family has set out a plate at the foot of the tree on Christmas eve for expected gifts. Christmas morning, breakfast being finished, I have always gone into

the library and played, fortissimo, on the piano, Ring Out the Bells for Christmas, and not until the last chord sounds is the door flung open. Then, believe me, comes a high-hearted game. It is my moment of happiness to hear the laughter and the Ohs! and Ahs! and to see the serene certainty with which each one hits upon the presents intended for him or her, though the line of demarcation is hopelessly lost because of the profusion of things. Life is happier, fuller, more joyful for me at that hour than at any other in the year. For there before me is happiness at desires abundantly gratified.

Wonderful things there were, this year, in the way of books; wonderful things in the way of toys and trinkets. There were things of fantasy, things of color, things of quaintness. There were queer manikin dolls with jointed arms and legs; more pretentious dolls with clothes so well made that they might have been used for children; a corybantic lady with abbreviated skirt which could be made to pose in as many graceful attitudes as Pavlova; jungle creatures; horses and deer and monkeys and elephants well made and credible; mechanical toys that climbed, danced, jumped, whirled. And lining book shelves and mantelpiece were Christmas cards, not negligible things, but works of art suggestive of character and quality. Then the radio! That came the last thing on Christmas eve, a present from that companion of mine with whom I've taken enchanted wanderings, one of those friends which somehow become a true, real and actual part of a man's life. May the giver of gifts give all men such an one.

So, for the children there are noble hours until dinner time, with all that new found wealth and all

those golden prospects. They camp on the hearth rug and for one day in all the year, Bessie the Aire-dale has the freedom of the room. For the other three hundred and sixty-four days she gets no further than the porch, though, on sunny days when the door is open, she touches the fringe of things daringly, squatting on the doorsill, four fifths of her within, one fifth where it should be. It is as if she said: "I'm within the letter of the law, observe. Tail out counts out, so there you are." There's that in her brown eye when you step over her.

Dinner is mine, dedicated to me and presided over by me, Mrs. F stepping aside, Christmas day being my birthday. Of course, she has designed the whole thing, seen to it with an infinity of patience, Margaret and Kittie aiding. And the number about the board has so grown that now there are two large roast geese as *pièce de résistance*, for Christmas without cheerful company would be no day at all. Generally, with talk and jests and reminiscences, the meal lasts well over an hour before the plum pudding comes in. Then is the great event, for it comes in blazing, carried by the eldest boy, the curtains being drawn and the table candles blown out to enhance the effect. Ask not, sweet reader, how I obtained material for the blaze. It is a long story and shall be a remembered experience, for it entailed a walk of many miles over the mountain and much delicate tact. But after the pudding comes the toasting of absent friends and they come back in little glimpses.

Then comes the homely comfort of the early evening with the ruddy firelight dancing on book-crowded shelves, on pictures, on the tree toys; then the night of enjoyment and games and jolly associa-

tion, with the coming of friends. Some of the games we have played year after year, some of the tricks have been done over and over again, but still the delight in them is fresh and eager.

And all that delight, I suppose, is nothing but the glory of companionship. Well there's a charm about it that appeals to me. Ruddy faces, laughing children, the memory of friends, shaded lamps, blazing logs, holly and mistletoe, the gaudy tree, the lavish spending, the eating and drinking, my sweet-faced girls and straight-standing lads, the jolly music, the special dinner provided for Bessie, all weave themselves into a tapestry somehow which serves to cover the bare reality of everyday, prosaic life.

Christmas may be a waste, a silly sentimentality, a day founded on "bunk" as someone has said, but for me it translates itself into a mighty pleasant warmth about the heart.

Forsans

SUPPOSE I try to set down things as they are—to seize the present moment, it seems to me that I can do no more than picture something that you can see for yourself, and, if we are both normal, that which I tell you I see must be something very like what you have seen. I cannot shock you, I cannot startle you. The measure of things that I have, is the measure of things that you have. Consider.

Overhead, the great, golden sun burns and it is as still as a day in the tropics. The whole world seems asleep for even the insects are quiet. The blue smoke from my pipe curls upwards in light rings and I watch it climbing into the green tracery of the leaves. Moving slightly, I see, far down the end of the solitary valley, the sheep resting under the giant oak by my pool of dreams, nor have they moved since morning. The sunlight, slanting, I know not how, has turned the leaves on the tree tops to gold and silver, and a far-off hill is ablaze with fiery glory.

My daughter, a slim, dancing creature of nine who believes in fairies and gnomes as heartily as I believe in microbes, has found a flower, blue and of feather-like delicacy, and I do not think that I understand the rapture with which she regards it. "You don't see all of it," she says to me when I expressed some modified admiration. Her words ring in my ears and I believe that she is right. I see less of it

than she does for her life is in some fine way, richer than mine. The azure sky is not the same to me as it is to her and I cannot discover new worlds as she does. But that is because in the pilgrimage of life I have lost something, and hers is the greater perfection of soul and of body. She is nearer to things that are splendid, sees beauties that escape me and the shadow of sadness that is on the world for me, she knows nothing of. True, for a moment, a brief moment, I may become absorbed in the beauty of a thing and so indifferent to all else, but with her the strange rapture is more lasting and it is clear that the things she loves, become a part of her. The trivial harshness and grievous passions of life have dulled me in some way; the sobs of human tragedy have deafened.

The Pergola

WHAT we call the pergola is really no pergola at all. It is a sort of arbor with oak logs set on six rough-built stone pillars, the whole in a green hollow on a hill side from which may be seen the distant Oklahoma hills. So it is a good place for a retreat after household talk and differences of opinion about the shape and structure of a contemplated porch; or the advisability of buying a new suit of clothes; or whether the surplus sheep should be sold to the butcher at four cents a pound on foot to be rebought as mutton at thirty-five cents a pound dressed, with my opinion expressed strongly against any selling whatever on the ground that (a) sheep look well on a landscape, (b) they do much toward paying the taxes, (c) they save the wages of a man as mower, and d, and e, and f, as they come to mind. And, let me say, there are few sights more delightful to me than a grassy slope with grazing ewes and lambs.

So I was sitting on the pergola, thinking how we had turned a wretched wilderness into a noble park, when the three children came, Helen, Ann and Herbert, the youngest ten, the oldest thirteen. The slight clothing they wore suited their bare arms and legs finely and I remembered Greek statues as I looked at them. Now if you will but let children alone, stuffing them with no nonsense in the way of suggestions, under almost any conditions, if they are healthy,

they will stir themselves to mirth and movement. And it was so in this case. Before three minutes they were on the seat—then up the stone pillars, then on to the criss-cross cover. In such cases, all you have to do is to wait for evidences of the coming of visions. Presently one said:

"I'm that old preacher who used to live on a top of a column."

"I am too. Let's play that."

So at once they were all Simeon Stylites, and there was a minute of contemplation, a kind of endeavor to seize the spirit of patience and endurance, I suppose. Then one of them became businesslike and confidential.

"How did he ever take a bath?"

"I don't know."

"Perhaps he waited for the rain."

"Goodness! I'd just hate to be a saint."

"So would I."

"Dad, who paid the saint? Where'd they get their money?" This from the boy, but there was no waiting for an answer. Evidently the hermit was dismissed as a dolorous figure.

"We are ten thousand feet high," said one of the girls.

"Yes," struck in the other. "Up on a high building and looking down."

"Like God."

"Yes. And the stones are city blocks."

"And the cracks are streets."

"And the sticks are trains and street cars."

"It must be awful lonely for Him."

"Well, there's wars now and then to look at, like that Zulu war in the Haggard book."

"I hate old wars and all that killing."

"So do I."

"So do I."

Then there was silence, and evidently that gate of dreams was closed.

"Let's pretend we're monkeys."

"Yes. Let's do."

"And I'll be—"

"No you won't. You'll be a monkey like the rest of us. Or you can be a gorilla if you like."

So with incredible swiftness they passed from the divine to the animal, squealing by way of imitating frenzied rage, hanging now by hands, now upside down, until Bessie the house dog found them, when the game ended. For at such times the dog is always treated with a sort of careful civility.

When it was seen that Bessie carried a ball which she had destroyed, there were affectionate remonstrances, a little disappointment too. But that mood did not last, for a minute later they were astride of a fallen tree trunk, afloat on a boat on tossing seas, starving; and presently drawing lots to decide which of them should be killed and eaten.

The Drama

AT Gayeta we have gone in for dramatics, by way of a marionette show, and that kind of performance. It takes the place of the out-door theater in which the summer performances are given. The winter show is a puppet theater, but no halfway one. The stage is three feet by three, set off by a proscenium, and with foot-lights, wings, back drop, scenery, curtain all complete—it is like the opera house seen through the little end of a telescope. And what with light effects brought about with electric torches, and dry batteries and little Christmas tree lights; and hidden and muffled phonographs; and Swiss music boxes; and practicable doors and windows; and a couple of trap doors,—what with all these and much more, we manage to get unforgettable scenes, and an audience accepting everything with unflagging faith. Perfectly genuine effects. And there's fun in arranging the stage sets, in painting the scenery, in dressing the puppets.

We gave a play from The Old Curiosity Shop, adapted from E. P. Dutton's Class Form Plays, with as much fun and interest afoot as if we had seen Duse or Hampden. More perhaps, because there is the fun of doing, instead of sitting an impassive spectator. To be sure we play hob with things, giving free play to our dramatic imaginations, working up effects tremendously, sometimes resolutely anachronistic, but we are freer to do what we please as we please; for example, the opening scene, according to the play,

shows Samson Brass and Sally and Dick Swiveller in an office. We preferred to have all that introductory work take place in brighter surroundings. So the first scene became a street fair, with a row of brightly painted houses, and tents, and side shows with painted canvases, and a fine cosmopolitan populace of white, yellow and colored, and a Prussian soldier or two with drawn swords, and very attentive ladies and gentlemen looking at horses and a graceful deer, and an elephant in cold indifference to the chief individual. Then, as it were along the street, ran a row of colored electric lights. So it was all very bright and gay, with Dick Swiveller delivering his introductory and explanatory soliloquies and asides as he moved about from entertainment to entertainment. For he had escaped from the Bevis Marks office and was determined to be breezy for once, enjoying himself robustly. And, though in another avatar he had been an infant, as close inspection of his face would show, yet he rattled along with easy geniality and carelessness until Samson Brass came on the scene, reproving his clerk for truancy. Anyway, things fitted together very well with a little manipulation of the text after the preliminary conversations, and in spite of fixed expressions on the faces of the puppets, their peculiar temperaments were soon established.

Nor did it matter much that sometimes, because of difficulties with strings, Samson Brass delivered himself of vindictive speeches while gyrating before his listener like a silly whirling dervish. Nor that because of technical problems Sally Brass, toward the end of the play always glided off the stage backwards. Nor that because one of the characters was

not to be found, he having been mislaid in the phonograph, a substitute went through the part in shameless nakedness, his paper clothing having fallen off at a critical moment. For in the audience was no supercilious incredulity. True that characters were ambulatory for the most part, and disregarded chairs; true some of them were unstable in crucial passages; true that though they challenged and threatened pugnaciously in powerful situations, they were in desperately unprepared condition for combat, and physical violence was expressed by a simultaneous gliding together of bodies, yet all that added to the piquancy of things. Anyway, realism has to stop somewhere, and in the real theater everyone knows that villain stabs hero with a rubber collapsible dagger, or shoots with an unloaded pistol. So why not stop before that? Why not give an audience some credit for responsive feeling, and vivid imagination, and dramatic intelligence?

Our characters were, the most of them, celluloid dolls made in Japan, of a sort to be bought for five cents each. So they had to go about their businesses with countenances in infantile complacency. But though they did not smile while making their sallies, their quips provoked as much laughter as the antics of a Chaplin, and far more than the forced and thin alleged funniness of Will Rogers. As for the character Brass, while originally he had a face with a delightfully bland smile, a dab or two of paint gave him an unshaven appearance, a line across the forehead by way of representing joined eyebrows made him look bad tempered, and the magical skill of the children with their needle made him disreputable, so, taken all in all, he made

a very attractive scoundrel and went his way tormenting and persecuting in thoroughly melodramatic manner. And towards the last, Dick Swiveller could not be separated without danger from the tankard of ale to which he had become attached in his scene with the Marchioness, so went through to the final reconciliation and clearing up, like one bearing outward and visible sign of his allegiance to an anti-Volsteadean policy.

The second play was a kind of Mrs. Barbour-Sandford and Merton-Noah-Webster-moral-lesson affair with the scene laid in 1815. Helen and Ann and Herbert had a tremendous time making the dresses and millinery, and did very creditable work with the help of some old fashion plates which we got from a Chicago bookseller. The story was all about two children who were ironically treated by Fate, being cheated out of a visit to a zoological garden because of some trifling act of disobedience, but we gave them princely surroundings by way of advance compensation. For their parlor was contrived after the fashion of the throne room of the royal palace at Stockholm, the outside of it not less imposing than St. Peter's, Rome, their garden like the Villa Pamphili-Doria. But we wanted to express opulence with velvet hangings and silk curtains, with gilt and mirrors, and voluptuous couches, and gorgeous costuming, and glittering ornamentation, and richly colored carpets. Then, when the impossibly priggish children of the play went out of doors, they stepped into an environment dingy enough to have satisfied the soul of an Artzibashev, and wandered about among tramps, criminals and drunkards, all of them voluble with contemptuous references to the honest rich.

At the Fair

SEVEN prizes for improved stock, the lads of Gayeta Lodge took at the county fair and in one case, thanks are due to Bolton Hall, author, lawyer and idealist who put us next. I record the fact with due humility, for, until two years ago, not one of us had as much as dug a potato which we had grown.* But the glory of it is not mine, for by nature I am a man of the mountains, and the plain, and the sea, and my eye delights not in the lustiness of cabbages, neither does my heart leap at the sight of a hoe, while a plow I regard as an engine most fearful and treacherous. But far nobler are the children of my body. The boys, though reared in the fair and gracious city of Cleveland and having gained some fame as students at East Tech, cast off their collars and ties, rolled up their sleeves, spat on their hands and went to work. There were a thousand failures, but a thousand lessons were learned; neither was there grouchiness, nor complaining. True, it did not all come to them by instinct, for there was some excellent training at the hands of men in the department of Agriculture in the state university. It was sound, practical work under those who knew their business and were not idle theorists. There was also some good advice dropped by visitors and friends, scientists who had not wandered so far from actualities as to have become infallible pedants and savants. So we won prizes on Barred Rock roosters,



Pekin ducks, hogs, sheep and a young Jersey bull. That last victory did not vastly delight me because of certain economic prejudices harbored. To trade on a monopoly does not seem to me to be fair dealing. It is a tasting of the joy of victory without the terror of battle.

At the Fair, that which most struck me as curious was the absence of real, hearty laughter; nor was there vivacity of conversation. And, *en passant*, mark well that good, wholesome laughter seems to be very rare nowadays, everywhere. There is, to be sure, a vast amount of derisive and ill-natured cachinnation at the sight of humility and suffering, as you may see by a casual glance at the so-called funny papers where the humorous point is in some one getting hurt, but there is little, far too little of that godlike laughter that has human sympathy in it. I remember once when Carl Sandburg was—but back to the fair.

There were no Wardles, Allworthys, Dr. Primroses or men of the Tabard Inn. Solemn men hung about the stock pens in twos or threes, draped themselves loosely around stanchions or planted themselves in rows along fences. Women, looking, for the most part overworked and worried, sunbaked and wrinkled, sat in booths or dropped wearily on chance empty crates for a few moments' rest. Younger folks weaved to and fro, in and out, hovering around fortune-telling booths, and stalls where was offered for sale strange and brightly colored waters of unknown composition. A few, here and there, cultivated enthusiasm on vanilla extract, the modern and local substitute for Benedictine. They often relapsed into impish buffoonery or deep melancholy.

The majority of the men were comfortably dressed in clean overalls, often honorably patched, but one, here and there, stood out uncomfortably with Sunday face. The young girls of the country were inclined to imitate their town sisters, adopting low shoes with high heels, silk stockings and dresses of diaphanous stuff. Some old-timers in highly decorated cotton with shiny leather belt enclosing ample waist, had come from over the hills in wagons, vehicles with great flapping covers that had seen much service, but sometimes open to a blistering sun. As a rule, the townspeople were as a race apart, rarely mingling with the hill folk and often walking about with a bored expression, flinging out an air of superiority of condescension, an atmosphere of being there because it is the right thing to do once a year, you know. That the place was ankle deep in yellow dust and that the thermometer registered high, did not prevent many of the town maidens from appearing in the beautiful and graceful dress of the day; delicate arms half exposed, half revealed; dresses at times so abbreviated that my vigilant and roving eye could, and did, catch sight of rolled stocking and bare knee, which, as Pepys would have said, did my heart good.

Everywhere were blatant advertisements, hideous, crude and often meaningless. To push business under the guise of pleasure was obviously the prime intention. So there were trade displays, leaflets, dodgers and "literature" as it is oddly called, and folders were stuck about in little boxes, nailed up in bunches, handed around and hung into the air by enterprising and original young men. Paper soon littered the ground or, flutteringly driven by light

winds, heaped in niches and corners to be reinforced by newspapers and lunch wrappers, banana and orange skins. Discarded melon rinds lay where they were thrown, expressing themselves in immovable majesty, serving a rational purpose in the cosmos as the breeding ground of the genus *Simulium*.

Most of the men gave me the impression of being tired, worn out, depressed by too much heavy work. Many walked about with lack-luster eyes, almost unseeing. A dull resignation was the outstanding characteristic. That the battle of life had been harsh could easily be seen. A composite photograph of a dozen farm men would give much the same result as one of the same number of Knut Hamsun's men of the soil or of Gorki's peasants. Evidently, the most of them had undertaken too much and were chained to the things they had gathered. They had become the slaves of their possessions and so knew nothing but weary toil and dull sleep. If it were not so you would see evidences here and there of the love of order and the sense of beauty. You would see, as you see in England and in France and in Germany, houses vine-clad, rose-embowered, bright with honeysuckle and dahlias. You would see well-kept gardens and painted gates and carefully tended shade trees. You would see small fields well drained and tilled, and fences prim and of arrow straightness. But such things are not, and for comfort, these men have but small time, being far too busy paying taxes and interest.

For the young there were no old-time pleasures; neither merry go round, nor ferris wheel, nor swing. The mechanical noise and glitter so dear to the childish heart, the circus, the steam calliope, the clown, the menagerie, the trained dogs: all these had

slipped into the past as irrevocably as the old-time Merry England wrestling matches and archery contests and foaming tankards of good, cool, grateful nut-brown ale. The simpler order of the past has vanished. To paraphrase Tennyson:

“Step by step we have lost a freedom known to Europe, known to all”: and our days are the days of enforced asceticism and the new generation is falling in the hands of those who would make of children prigs and unwholesome sentimentalists.

We are, indeed, living in a time, a dark time, when a man does not rejoice to give his best to his work and when things are being so narrowed by pernicious meddlers, most diabolically energetic, that we cannot live with any large hope of contact with the world of sense. I make no plea for Hedonism, nor for pleasure as an end in itself. But let it be remembered that in life there are honest cakes and ale, there are things, stupid perhaps in themselves, yet which stand as a grateful buffer between us and the painful, sordid and base things of life which at times we may in no wise escape. And shame it is that such things should be swept away. Shame it is that day by day the world should become duller, blanker, grayer. For it is by no means well that one by one the things should be riven from us which make the heart more gay: better it is that we should dance down the avenue of the years than that we should shuffle and sob a dreary way.

The Kasidah

LAST night out in the open, my cot in a clearing, I lay long, looking at the stars, and the things for which men fret their lives, seemed puny. I had been stirred to the depths of my being that evening by a reading of the Kasidah and a wonderful, most wonderful revelation I had found it. In past years, in lonely places, some such philosophy had possessed me, but it was elusive as a mountain mist. Similar thoughts must have possessed many

“Who pass through Life like caged birds, the captive of
a despot will
Still wondering How and When and Why and Whence
and Whither, wond’ring still”

for at bottom, all men’s thoughts are the same, but it is given to few to voice the wonder and mystery; perhaps none voiced it until Haji Abdn with the piercing eye, clear as onyx, confided his secret to Richard Burton. For Haji was, yet was not Burton. Most certainly he was not the Burton who talked to men in London, the Burton who scornfully threw the Arabian Nights to the English public when he found what it wanted and knew that the gate of his dreams was closed. For the Kasidah is the soul of the real Burton and none may read it without being wiser, most ineffably richer. To quote and to copy for you who read would be well, and fain would

I do so, but that cannot be. So you must get the book for yourself.

Perhaps I was in the mood for it. The day had been a golden one and the sky fleece covered, and a cool, green breeze had flowed from Mount Kessler so gently as to lightly ruffle my hair and to lift the papers, hold them a moment to let them gently fall as if invisible beings were about and curious to read. Over from the hill side where is a sun-plashed little wood came the voice of a lamb and the sad mother cry answering, and from the orchard shade the sound of a cow bell and the song of a bird. From another part of the house the piano sounded brazenly, and it was a song of Norway, a song of strength and of decision, and the chords of it crowded upon one another so that the confusion of low hills became as a mighty sea suddenly stilled and the green was the translucent green of the waves that race a ship. Then the song ceased and I heard the whispering grasses, and the breeze bore to me the silver of the children's voices from the little brook at the hill foot. And in the book I read this:

“Eternal Morrows make our Day; Our *Is* is aye to *be* till
when
Night closes in; 'tis all a dream, and yet we die—and
Then
Cease, Man, to mourn, to weep, to wail;
Enjoy thy shining hour of sun;
We dance along Death's icy brink, but is the dance less
full of fun?”

The Younger Generation

A LONG, and not at all too long a letter from Billy Large sets me thinking of what is called the Problem of the Younger Generation, the which I hold to be no problem at all, but rather an illusion. I have a suspicion that the much advertised Problem is a red herring drawn across a trail, to lead suspicion away from the real problem—The Problem of the Middle-Aged Generation—for if ever problem existed, it is one with its silly old statesmen who could not and cannot prevent wars; with its log-headed economists who seem unable to find a just mode of taxation; with its ridiculous publicists who fill stores with trash; its prohibitionists and anti-prohibitionists; its secret societies and its meddling organizations; its strikes and industrial disputes; its grafting officials; its boodlers in office; and ten thousand other idiocies. A generation not to be trusted much further than you could throw a millstone, as the saying goes. The real mischief lies in sensationalism and an unwarranted reputation given to the young, thereby causing a sort of standard to be set up, which standard, in the eyes of the poorer fish, becomes a sort of ideal to be lived up to. So you get the “might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb” attitude, to say nothing of the Nature imitating Art stunt. Those who do not propose to deceive themselves, or to be deceived, should judge by their

own bailiwick; how their own young folk behave; what principles seem to be adopted; what notions of conduct are being formed.

Looking at my miniature world at Gayeta, I am not yet alarmed. Indeed, it has struck me when comparing my mental contacts with the young and my contacts with the middle-aged, taking things by and large, there seems to be more delicacy of responsibility revealed in the junior set than in the older ones. I am judging from my own community only. And to do that, I hold, is safe, and proper; just as a physician examining a patient suspected of malaria, takes a drop of blood from the lobe of the ear. As to aims in the young, one or two examples leap to mind, of a mighty pleasing sort. I remember two young fellows who visited at Gayeta while at the university. They told me, last year, that they aimed to strike out for themselves. So, no sooner were their examinations ended, than they went to work, making a home in a little house which I have to spare. They did their own cooking, wood cutting, house-keeping, meanwhile pegging away at their reading and writing. What their means were I did not know, nor took trouble to find out, but, presently, there were results in the shape of articles written for and accepted by newspapers and magazines. And their aims were high. They wanted to do something worth while. They wanted to see things, and not things of the cities. They wanted to know how some folk lived; shepherders, and prospectors, and those characters who flounder about living curiously. But for them, there was none of that nonsense of playing hobo, or of jumping trains, or of Greenwich Village. Nor were they content with their academical instruction

judging it sufficient to give them a job on some newspaper. They aimed high, I repeat.

With their earned money they bought an automobile, or rather paid something down on one. Then off they went, into Texas, to El Paso, to Amarillo, to Taos in New Mexico. And there they saw things intelligently, found what was to be found out about Indian ceremonies, cosmogonies, folk tales, myths, festivals. They talked with herders, miners, artists. They did odd jobs, but, mark you, without loss of self-respect. And, rich in material, they turned back with the idea of working it up, and so came again to Gayeta, where they are perfectly welcome, chiefly because in them is rectitude of motive and purpose. Talking with them I have always felt sure that somehow they have learned how to consider a subject and to form an opinion. They know how to discipline themselves. They are game to struggle. They possess a spirit of industry. They strike me as being youths of high principle. So I back them to win on the same grounds on which I backed Gene Tunney.

There is another lad who comes here often. He is a young Russian. (The others, I should have said, are Americans.)

The Russian has had a varied career for his years—getting somehow from the neighborhood of Petrograd across Siberia, to Japan, then here. His aim, he told me quite simply, is to know what there is to know. And I assure you that he is a good efficient fellow not given to chasing trifles. He strikes me as being strict and methodical, given to close application, the stronger for that rigorous discipline which he has known. I get the feel of a trained intellect, talking with him.

I first saw the lad at a side show in town, one of those in which traveling boxers and wrestlers challenge the crowd, offering a ten-dollar bill to anyone who will beat their man. The lad accepted the challenge and beat the professional. And so he turns an honest penny, taking on any wrestler who cares to meet him. A forthcoming match on a big scale which is in the offing may bring him a larger amount than usual. At least I hope so.

The lad has perfect dignity and self-possession. He has a natural ability enabling him to think and to study. He is full of intelligent conviction on hundreds of subjects. He, like the two before mentioned, seems to me to have a high code of honor. In brief, the three lads have that discipline in manners and morals which is the true aim of education, as I see it.

Bill was another of the same kind. He won the Rhodes scholarship and went to Oxford. But no sooner was he there than he was picked to represent England on the International hockey team, so took the opportunity thus offered to make a trip down to Gayeta. I had given him a letter to my princely friend, Cunninghame Graham, so we had a good reminiscent talk, he having paid homage as due. So also he called on the man who plays Amis to my Amiel, and who lives in New York City, and of that visit too had good things to tell.

Four good lads these, harmoniously developed in mind and body; looking for no applause; enemies to dilettantism; full of zeal; candid and sincere; clean in person and character; the sort the country needs. Heaven keep them from those of craft and intrigue, belonging to the older generation!

I say again and again, and yet again, they are a

little breed who attempt to belittle the coming generation. And those are fit candidates for that millstone of which Christ spoke, who would smear the high-spiritedness of youth with the slime of their own lubricity.

I know, with my own children, what the downward pull is, the pull made by those with ulterior motives, and which must be offset by all parents with vigilance and labor. Silly, shallow-pated women with daughters, who want to give parties with the marriage market in mind; foolish men of up-lifting watchwords who want to use the young for their own silly purposes; getters-up of entertainments for churches and societies who sacrifice soundness to empty display; people who never gave a moment's serious thought to anything who want to pose as moralists; silly painted girls who try to model their manners and conduct on the impossible heroines of the flapper-fop press; boys from the back-woods in their first college year who pose as tremendous fellows, with unlimited wealth at their command, doing heroic deeds with a dollar at the drug store; sensation mongers who strew the book stalls with vapid nonsense; sentimentalists who are local windbags; propagandists full of selfishness; idiots who want to get up parades; a thousand and one asses full of meretricious pretense.

It is not the young, I say, who are to be blamed, if blame there is to be, but those of the middle-aged generation.

But do not set too high a value on the schools and institutions of learning. You achieve no crowning triumph by sending boy or girl to college. Indeed, it is grotesque and ridiculous to look upon

mere book-learning and classes as a something to which all should be subjected. First build your boy or girl. First aim to develop character. First leave the child free to find an ideal. The rest will take care of itself.

One of my lads cared nothing at all about the higher institutions of learning, though his high school record was excellent. His expressed aim was to produce the best line of poultry possible. So, high school being finished, he set to work, diligently, industriously, persistently. And he is winning. And there's quite as much done for society in the raising of a good chicken as in writing a sonnet. Burbank stands as high as Shakespeare. The world owes as much to Stephenson of the locomotive as to Stevenson of Treasure Island. Henry Ford's invention was of as positive and distinct character as DeFoe's invention of the novel. The growth of society must be symmetrical, and without nourished root there can be no flower. Over emphasis as to purely intellectual pursuits is weakness.

So, as I said at the beginning, judging from what I know, there is no cause for alarm. If there is a surplus of energy, the young folk take it out in tennis, or horseback riding, or boxing, or shooting, or wood-chopping, or pitching horse shoes, or punching the bag. But there's no vicarious athletics; by which I mean the pretending to a love of sport by watching a ball game from the grandstand, or riding for hours in an automobile and calling that getting the fresh air. Take it from me, luxury is the destroyer.

Tale of a Spontaneous Lie

ACROSS the valley from my house which is set on a hill, live a worthy couple with no family. Husband and wife, they are industrious, neat, good-hearted, genial. They are people who do things with remarkable spirit.

You must picture the man as well on towards sixty, neat in washed-faded overalls, ruddy of face, one going about his work in a kind of stately prime. You must picture him at the falling of dusk, attending to the comfort of his cow and horse, closing his chicken houses, whistling as he works, then, as the last act of the day, walking down the flower-lined path to his gate, where the lilacs are, and after seeing to the latch, standing awhile with folded arms resting on the gate, smoking his pipe with an air of comfort because of a well-spent day. You must also picture the woman clean-aproned, sun-bonneted, double-chinned, full-breasted, buxom. You must see her as of the kind that, hearing of distress, loses no time before she is off carrying well-packed basket covered with white napkin, an angel of mercy and kindness, willing to tramp the hills for miles on her errand. You must see her the very picture of good-humor, standing on her honeysuckle-covered porch, her large capable hands on her hips, her arms a-kimbo. Or you must picture her walking from the warm straw-littered barn, a lipping bucket of milk in each hand. Or you hear her calling home her absent

turkeys with a "Coo-ee! Coo-ee!" But perhaps it is better to imagine her giving welcome to any stranger, the penniless and feckless no less than those in better case, clinging close to the law of sup and bite. She is that sort of woman, one full of nature-taught, fine breeding. Hospitality and well-doing are matters of instinct with her.

It may be more difficult for you to imagine a neighborhood call over at that cottage, one of those gatherings with everyone grave, good-behavior demanding the mood serious and solemn. The people calling will all behave gently enough, arriving in a little crowd, and so hot on one another's heels as to cause some strain of civility in the welcoming and placing of them. The men, for the most part, will not enter the house, but, after making their presence known, stand about in the barn, or squat on their heels outside in the sun. Those who go in will refuse chairs, leaving them for the woman and the preacher and the school-teacher. Conversation at first is difficult and the subjects discussed varied. Circumscribed in their outlook, not many sides can those there see to any situation. There might be a little digging up of buried memories, a passing reference to the church or the school, some wild dispute about the best time to plant this or that, some comment upon the rapacity of the town merchants who they suspect to be leagued against the countryman. But all that would be nothing more than the prelude to more serious business. Touching human conduct the conversational rivulets would run into broader and easier channels. Partisanship and personal bias would be forgotten in the fine sport of finding fault with the tastes and deeds and principles of others. Anything

would serve to sweep the company into the broad, flashing river of criticism—the shape of a house, the strain of poultry favored, the price of fence wire.

“I’d like to fence that there three-acre patch if the blamed wire didn’t cost so much,” one might say.

“That’s trusts and the war,” another would add.

“I seen that up at the Lodge they’re putting up a new fence. A pile of money that man spends on that place. He’ll never get out of it half nor quarter of what he put in.”

“No. He won’t. I’ll say. If he’d a-asked me, I’d ’uv told him where to head in at an’ saved him a whole lot of money.”

“Spends money like water, he does.”

“Foolish waste. They’re putting up a basket ball outfit for the children now. It’s a playground already. They got a tennis game there now. I don’t know what all besides.”

“Ah! Good land gone to waste.”

“They do say, though I wouldn’t like to have it said I said so, they do say he drinks.”

“He’s one of them what never shows it.”

“Not he. But they say that when he has a drink in him money’s nothing.”

“Well, of course, in a way that drinkin’ ’s what you may call his business. Them writing men all drinks. That’s where they get imagination.”

“There was Poe,” put in the preacher.

“They are all that way.”

And so on, and so on. From andante to allegro, to vivace, to precipitoso. From amble to trot to canter to gallop. The flashing river becomes a very torrent of verbosity. Inartificial and untutored as they may be, they are as capable of attacking a rep-

utation as any skilled literary man—as skillful in the art of blackening as the Hyde who wrote of Father Damien, or as Henley who wrote of Stevenson, or as Frank Harris when he wrote of Hyndman, or as any Sycorax who weaves a sorcerer's spell. The gossip, the backbiter, the pasquillant, mind you, is not confined to the backwoods.

Not to make too long a story, know also this, because it has to do with the affair.

Up in these heights, on a morning with a sunny and calm sky, sound travels far. Often, curiosity and interest has led me to stand for half an hour listening to the astonishing noises of nature, sorting this from that—the voices of the children playing in the far-away school yard; the masterful trumpet-throated rooster over the hill; some deep-stentorian shout from a full-lunged plowman calling to his horses; the birds over in the labyrinth in their unrestrained uproariousness; the beat of an ax in the woods.

Well, seated on my porch, drinking the morning coffee, there came on the still air the high-pitched voice of a woman, then the deeper note of a man's voice. Looking up, across the valley I could see the indistinct forms of a man and woman. Then I recognized my woman neighbor, chiefly by her voice. The very words she said I heard. She was telling the man that the mare had had a colt that morning. Ceasing to be interested, I went away to my office to write.

Now that afternoon, as it happened, things shaped themselves so that I walked over to my neighbors' to buy something they had to sell. The good folk were as hospitable as possible, and the woman, almost as if she quoted the ballad of Barbara Allen,

called on me to note how the buds were a-swelling. Then:

"By the way," said I, "so the mare had a colt this morning, did she?"

The woman lifted her hands in surprise.

"Why, yes," she said. "How did you come to know?"

Then it was that the ready lie leaped to my lips, quite without any volition of my own, and I said:

"Over our radio, of course. You see the wire runs from the barn to the house, east and west, and you were talking to Mr. Page. I was listening to some music from Nebraska, and both your voices came clear."

"Well, well, well. Who'd ha' thought it!" she exclaimed, throwing up her hands, "And is it often like that?"

"Quite often," I answered. "You have what's called a radio voice, and our instrument is very sensitive. Why, often and often I've heard what your company talked about and not wishing to butt in, switched off the machine."

"Now what do you think of that Merrick?" she said to her husband. "Just think how careful one must be."

"A body oughtn't to talk without thinking what he's saying," observed the good man, gravely. "When you come to think of it."

"Why it's just a lesson from Providence," she said, in a kind of panic-stricken voice. It was easy to see that she was both excited and bewildered.

After that I would not pursue the subject though the woman seemed anxious to do so, though in a guarded and diplomatic way.

As to the Well Walter Dug

AM I to be set down as a man of fads after a lifetime of hard-headed and hard-fisted slamming against certainties? Am I to go on and on, from mystery to mystery until I babble of Seven Forms of Nature and the three Principles, and Karma and psychic powers latent in Man, and all that kind of thing? I trust not, but here's a something which seems worth the telling.

First, know that I am perfectly au fait with some of the myths of the Middle Ages regarding the so-called divining rod, how it was used to detect murderers, to further the ends of justice, and so on, all of which I look upon as I do upon other myths and fancies. And I have read, as in the *Mundus Mathematicus*, how a friend of Dechales, with a hazel rod, could "discover springs with the utmost precision and facility, and could trace on the surface of the ground the course of a subterranean conduit." But to that I never gave as much as a second thought.

Now, however, I am brought to a strange story which I must tell as things occurred and with what exactness I can, and here it is.

One of my sons, the poultry raiser, finding his business increasing, decided to build on a hill side, putting up one main building at a cost of eight hundred dollars, and several smaller ones. The hill side was at an altitude of ninety feet from the nearest running water, and more than that from the nearest well, an eighth of a mile away, which was

sixty feet deep. So we contemplated engaging a well driller, expecting to go down some hundred feet or more, because the ground all about was very dry. Indeed, we had made tentative arrangements with the driller.

But one day a neighbor came over, a hardy old man of more than seventy, and as honest a soul as you might wish to know. We spoke about the new buildings and the proposed well, then he said, quite simply: "Well, you'd better see about water first. I'll try with the stick if you want me to. It may save a whole lot of money."

Whereupon, finding us willing, he cut a twig from a peach tree, leaving it Y shaped, then held the stick with his fingers closed upon the branching arms, the rod horizontal, his palms uppermost and his thumbs pointing outwards, but grasping the stick very tightly. I took particular notice because I had never seen the experiment tried before.

In all he must have walked a quarter of a mile back and forth, even across a little dry creek, but with the twig always perfectly rigid. Then, of a sudden, while he was talking about the price of apples, and when we who watched had given up all hope of any demonstration, he stopped dead—almost rigid in attitude like an Airedale making a discovery, and there was the forked twig most certainly pointing downwards; then he loosened his arms, stuck the point of the twig in the ground and said "Dig there. You'll get water within thirty feet." He added: "I know it will come as I say, but I don't believe in it as I should do."

Naturally, seeing that, we all wanted to try the experiment. It seemed to work with some, but not

with others. And with those who were successful, the stick in most cases pointed downwards, but in two cases flew upwards, striking the holder on the breast. I tried it myself, with eyes tightly closed, and positively felt, as it seemed, that the stick twisted in my hands, although I held it as tightly as I could. But, I thought, I might have twisted the stick unconsciously. Later we tried other experiments, after calling in one of the most logically minded men I know, a chemist. I am not at liberty to give his name. For him, also, the stick turned. So we tested and tried it another place, none of us believing in what we did; and, trying to do the thing exhaustively, divided ourselves into three parties, with some of what seemed to be the susceptible ones in each of the parties. We chose judges to mark where what I will call a "point" was made, but without the others seeing or knowing of it. Then the others tried and in some cases hit upon the exact spot located.

But that did not end the matter. I hunted up a well digger, Walter, and contracted with him to go to a depth of thirty feet for \$130. And, naturally, the spot chosen was that indicated by our water-finding neighbor. Foot after foot Walter dug, with every foot as dry as a bone, down through earth, through a layer of stone and gravel, to black shale. Then it became a case of dynamiting, the stuff was so hard. And day after day there was nothing but dry black shale until we came to twenty-nine feet. Then Walter shouted out that water was near and sent up in a bucket what he called a kidney stone, which was an ordinary water-round stone about the size of two fists which he had seen imbedded in the shale. Such stones are frequent at a certain depth

hereabouts. Half a foot lower we came to a light vein of water, so stopped. The well has now eighteen feet of water in it, the original amount which flowed in on the day following our stopping work having been somewhat augmented by a rain which came a couple of days afterwards.

So there's the true story with nothing psychic about it. Thinking about it I am always bewildered a little, especially when it seems that the only way to account for it all is that some people are super-sensitive to the presence of water, and their unrecognized emotion results in a muscular movement which moves the stick. Certainly there can be no affinity between a stick and water or else a stick being dropped when a little distance away from a hidden water place there should be a fall in a slanting direction, which there is not. But then, what of a sensitiveness that would detect the presence of water which lay hidden thirty feet below all those tons of earth and stone? That seems incredible. I have tried to imagine analogous circumstances in other fields. Suppose a land of the blind, and the appearance among them of a man with his sight. Those blind, who knew nothing at all of sight, would be sceptical of a man who declared that he was sensible of a tree a mile away. The phenomenon would be as inexplicable to them as the water-finding is to me.

By one of those illusions by which, on first having attention called to a new thing, references and books dealing with the particular subject seem to crowd before the eye, since looking into the water-finding subject I have come across much that is interesting. For instance, I learn that the British, or Indian-British authorities, countenance water-finding in a

measure, and that the municipality of Bombay has so many "dowsers," as they are called, on the official payroll. Also that Sir William Barrett, F.R.S., has recently written a book which he calls *The Divining Rod*, after much reading and much experiment and sifting of evidence, and arrives at a definite faith. It is that many people, perhaps the majority who live in the open, do unconsciously feel the presence of water much as animals do, which feeling expresses itself in involuntary muscular reaction, and hence the movement of a stick held in a certain way by which the slightest of movements will throw it out of balance. The investigator's final verdict was given after he had seen that many successful water-finders dispensed with the stick.

I also learn that on the *veldt*, in South Africa, some corporations with activities depending upon a water supply, always engage accredited water-finders, and in two hundred tests there were only six failures to find water within forty feet of the surface, when drilled wells ran to a depth of two hundred feet.

Nevertheless, I am sceptical in spite of all. I cannot let the idea become part of me just yet. My position is very much as it was when I was first taught that the moon caused the tides. I repeated the formula mechanically, but could not, for years, convince myself that the moon had any power of attraction. It ceased to be a whimsical speculation only after many years, and after the acquisition of new facts which were stepping stones.

And there are questions which will arise in my mind relating to this water-finding. The most stubborn of them arises from a suspicion that there is

water not very far from the surface almost everywhere. Now if a certain spot is chosen and the man with the spade digs, he will naturally stop at the first indication, at a narrow vein, from which water will flow which is judged enough for ordinary domestic needs, especially after a rain fall has augmented it. But in the case of a well being drilled, the drillers would simply disregard the little vein. The damp shale brought up would be looked upon as an indication, and no more. So they would pass through in a few minutes to a sub-strata of hard stuff, and go down and down through dry earth until they struck a considerable vein of water. And surface water is not so hard to find. There have been wells scratched in the Sahara, in the Kalahari, in the Atacama desert, all of which gave sufficient water for a family's needs until exceptionally dry weather came.

As you will see then, in a field with a skin of water at a depth of thirty feet, with ten well drillers at work, and ten men digging with spades, with all the well drillers passing the thin water and going on until they struck a broad vein a hundred feet lower, and with all the spade men acting upon the water-finders' advice and discovering the thin vein, the appearances would be all in favor of the water-finder.

But I would dismiss the notion of wilful fraud on the part of the "dowser" or water-finder. Few of them accept money for their services. None of them pretend to any power of a psychic kind. My notion, without any ingenious assumptions, is that there is water almost everywhere—that the water-finders act in good faith and that the dipping of the stick is the result of unconscious fatigue. That, of course, fails to account for certain coincidences

Yahoos

A TALL, lean young man in whose company I walked many miles along a highway, told me, among other things, that Perfect Happiness would reign were Perfect Freedom established. Nor was he to be shaken in his belief as I perceived, for, ever as I opened my mouth to say something, he began again with great volubility. His was not so much a discourse, as a chattering activity of hortatory remarks.

Now there have been times in my life when no man was more free than I and when no more devout worshipper of the goddess of Liberty lived, so, very naturally I yearned to tell my traveling companion many things. As he talked, I remembered my ride from Buenos Ayres, recalling, in particular, one golden day with a heaven clear and blue, a day on which nature sparkled with life. I remembered sweet-smelling plants and shrubs that scented the air as I brushed them, and I remembered as if it had been but the day before, the fragrant flowers and bright, flowers of so wonderful a beauty that I looked away to enjoy them the more, and so lifted my eyes to the mountains, half mist wrapped, to see, through a rift, a still more distant range all violet and purple. And when the light began to fade and I lay smoking and counting the timid, early stars, or saw the violet, black mountain standing sentinel against a sky of green and scarlet, it seemed to me that of all fine

things, the finest was the the right of a man to do as he pleased with his own, and in nothing was man cursed as with those limitations imposed upon him by states and governments.

But to-day, there are times when I curse freedom and human independence, and the subjugating hand of man. To specify, when I built me this lodge in a vast wilderness, I faced the house in such wise that the rear of it gave upon a prospect every whit as beautiful as the front, so that the maid in the kitchen might be cheered as well as those who sat in the library. For near the back door was a hill of pleasant outline, all tree covered, so that our eyes fell on it with gladness when it was tenderly colored by the setting sun. There, too, were wavering shadows and splashes of sunshine sometimes, and the lightest wind creeping from bough to bough would set the whole hill side to murmuring like the echo of a distant sea, and that I loved the most. Nor in winter was it less joyful a sight, for then, with every branch and limb white dotted, with a hill side snow flecked, it became an open-laced curtain of nature's weaving.

But in one short month that glory fled. What was a swelling slope in a garment of green has become a sad, lonely naked hill and the face of it is furrowed and worn, and there are gashes and deep wounds, and stumps, and piles of brush stand stark in the sun glare.

For light and empty idiots with monstrous appetite have raped the hill maiden and the soul of her is dead, and she, the victim of lust, has no more beauty in the eyes of man.

Meditation

DURING the holidays, it fell to my lot to officiate in a friendly way at the piano for a crowd of dancing youngsters. Waltz, two-step, tango followed one another with dismal regularity. But to play that kind of thing is not at all difficult. It is easy to improvise, and, presently the work becomes merely mechanical and the mind is left free for higher things. Mine was. It was this way. For the first twenty minutes or so of playing, the task promised to be a bore. Presently my eye fell on a Christmas card that stood on the piano top, just over the music rack. It was the handsomest thing of its kind I ever saw, a piece of die-sinking work, a segment not much larger than a postage stamp, with a tiny picture representing the visit of the Magi. The very complete and harmonious coöperation and union between artist and workman was noticeable. The blues, reds and golds of it harmonized wonderfully and the little border was richly designed. It reminded me of the missal work I have seen on old vellums. The beauty and perfection of workmanship astonished me, and, as I played on, my mind ran back to far-off days when time was no object and the pious artist and scribe could work quietly and lovingly to make a thing of beauty with no fear of the demands of a world market or a best seller. It was a pleasant oasis in the social desert.

Mea Culpa!

THERE are certain passages in my life which, when reflected on in prayerful mood, give me infinite pain. Sometimes, for years, they lie dormant, then a mere word, an act, the sight of something brings them, or some of them to mind. In a manner of speaking, the trumpet sounds and the dead rise incorruptible. Out from a mysterious land of shadow leaps my secret sin. My head is shorn of its strength and my heart faints within me. About me is a withering moral atmosphere and all my vital powers become depressed and enfeebled, nor can I cleanse my soul nor free my spirit from serpent sorceries. I am changed to stone as by a Medusa glance.

Something of the sort happened yesterday when I opened a package of music and drew forth a book on First Lessons in Improvisation. That which lay unsuspected leaped forth. I was overcome with a sense of weakness and shame at the thought of past transgressions. The demon within me stirred up fumes which, like magic, stole away my contentment. Nor was there any near to deliver me from the depths of my own loneliness. So then and there I decided to seek the sweet consolation of confession.

Know then that years ago I studied music in Frankfort, sat at the feet of the Masters, drank beer in the Palmengarten, bought a gold-handled parasol for a German girl and charged it up to my father as sheet music purchased, made pilgrimages

to the Judengasse and looked soulfully at the Beethoven house, erected Czerny into an infallible authority, read Paul de Kock and Gautier, attended the opera and pretended to understand what was going on on the stage but sometimes secretly wished it was Haverley's Minstrels, wore a high hat and carried a cane, allowed my hair to grow bushy and tried to figure out some way in which I might fight a duel and get scarred without being hurt: did, in fact, those things which all students did. So in course of time I was handed a kind of diploma which I carried about quite a long time and finally lost somewhere near Rio Deseado in the Argentine. Later my education stood me in good stead and here and there I became organist in little churches possessing Carnegie organs. Now little churches are given to functions: weddings for instance where the contracting parties are the "best people in town": lodge funerals: Decoration and Memorial day services: high festivals: special services: extraordinary affairs connected with prohibition movements: union services in which rival preachers are awarded by the committees in charge, open, closing and middle prayers so that there shall be a fair field and no favor: rallies and round ups. For, mark you, in a small town everyone is supposed to jump every time the church bell rings.

Now often, I was driven to the very verge of despair for music to fill up when the word was passed in a hoarse whisper to "keep the organ going." Especially was this the case at a wedding or a funeral when the whole congregation filed solemnly with a kind of automatic gravity to view the departed, telling one another how they were struck with admi-

ration to see his natural appearance. To depend upon the choir during the progress of a festival in black was quite idle for half of them were at times in tears, a fourth asleep and the balance love making. So, being an experienced hand and quite lacking in conscience, I fell to playing sailor chanties such as Ranzo Boys or Sail away for the Rio Grande, which, done lento, transposed into a minor key, and with lavish use of the tremolo stop proved very effective indeed. Often, at the close of the services in the church vestibule, I was arrested by this one or that and asked the name of the "sweet little thing that was so pretty," whereupon I affected to look puzzled, and thought for a moment. Then, "I am not sure," said I, "unless—" I think that often I relapsed into a kind of nonsensical gravity and ejaculated, "Oh yes. Palestrina. Grand fellow." The effect of course was exactly the same as if I had played a Gregorian chant.

I do not glory in these things and far be it from me to write to send a twinge of blasphemous irony down any one's spine, but, with a congregation of musical pretenders I have actually at times produced a dramatic climax by working up, as it were, to a pitch at which, when the crucial moment arrived, the saying of "I do" by the blushing bride for instance, tears were excited and goatish old reprobrates gulped hard to control their emotions. Again, I have achieved a lachrymose triumph by hiding a boy soprano in the organ and having him sing Nearer My God to Thee, by arrangement with the preacher who, excited by the emotional storm he himself had helped to raise, fell into a kind of ecstatic frenzy. Mind you, I am not alone in my sin, for

there are unredeemed humbugs of organists doing much the same all over this nation of ours which stands on star-crowned heights. I make my contrite confession in all humility.

Here and There

UNDER a great oak and by the Pool of Dreams, one day some dozen of us sat, one reading aloud. It was pleasant there, with the wavering shadows making a strange arabesque on the surface of the water, the dancing butterflies coquetting, the air heavy with the scent of unseen flowers, while now and then, the lightest of winds troubled the little pond and moved the toy schooner whose uncertain progress a boy watched. Far to the west, so far as to appear like a soft violet cloud, the Ozarks, a frail barrier, stood outlined against a turquoise sky. But on the other side of that line of blue hills tragedy stalked. There at Tulsa, in Oklahoma, the thin veneer of civilization had peeled, and the ape and the tiger were loosed. There was the explosion of long overwhelming and bitter thoughts, the riotous outbreak of pent passion, burning, crushing, slaying. The joy of tearing, outraging, destroying, the lust for murder, hearts scorched with hatred, the monstrous malice that Yahoo man is capable of. These things were rife on the other side of the hills. Here, a few found inexpressible delight in the green earth, the softly humming bees, the unalarmed birds. There, a few miles to the west, was the black cloud of rapine and hate . . . The insane laughter of defiant vice and the pitiful wail of outraged innocence. . . . It sickens one to think of it all.

Give ear if you will, to the praters who tell of the brotherhood of man, of human progress, of the growth of liberty and intelligence, but remember that at Tulsa there was a horror that must not be dwelt upon, a nightmare picture on which men will not care to look twice. Better far that it be swiftly visualized, then forgotten as a shame. Forgotten that night of tragedy, of hurrying feet, of crowds roaring like a fire. Forgotten those tongues of smoking red flames leaping into the sky and the burning homes of the negroes, the fleeing people, the wailing women haggard and sad, with their little ones foot-sore and panic-stricken, driven by men lowering and savage, foul-mouthed and lustful. Forgotten the things that happened that night upon which a horrible interpretation might be put, and forgotten too the dead bodies lying in contorted attitudes, the wounded bandaged with filthy, bloody rags, some too frightened for flight. Forgotten the heat and the smoke and the noise, and the angry shouting voices. Too, let it be forgotten and buried twenty fathoms deep that here, in the town in which I write, the daily paper, knowing as well as I know that the Adjutant General of Oklahoma had laid the whole tragedy to nothing more than the combination of "an impudent negro, an hysterical girl and a yellow journal" yet on its front page prints this: "Tulsa Did, and Tulsa Will again if the occasion ever presents itself." Mark the shame of it I say, and forget.

A Storm

A WHIRLWIND passed over our section the other day and it could not have been more than fifty yards wide. My house rests in a sort of lap formed by two ridges, and commands a valley that stretches for twenty miles without a break, to lose itself in a thin blue line of flat-topped hills in Oklahoma. Looking westward, today, everything is pleasant and smiling, as it was before the storm, but along the hill side to the south, is a brownish streak of dead trees which were overthrown or destroyed.

We were enjoying the evening leisure after an oppressive day and there came, sailing swiftly over the terrace-like hills, a vast, fish-shaped cloud, greenish black and ominous, that changed shape soon so that it was like the hull of a mighty ship sailing in the skies, and, seeing it, I was reminded of a time when, swimming in deep waters off the Canaries, I looked up through the dim green to see the misty outlines of the schooner from which I had dived. But that shadow stood still. This one flew swiftly, blotted out the sun, swallowed the sky, so that there was sudden darkness and a hush came over the world. Presently, at the far end of the fast-flying cloud there appeared a new thing, a whitish-gray disturbance with a silvery glint at the edge, and it was a motion that was a mighty churning. It was like the sudden swirling of water when a plug is drawn from the bottom of a vessel. It was like the slim line of wavering

light seen for a moment at the far end of some precipitous gorge which vanished at a step. Or it was like a sudden sword that shimmered. A moment later hills were no longer distinguishable from cloud.

Light came again with a rush, and with it, two winds that strove for mastery so that trees were tossed and bent low, and our house rocked and groaned like a storm-tossed ship. Then it seemed as if another wind was unchained, an upper wind that swept over lesser winds and a noise was everywhere like a despairing howl. And the greater wind battled with the lesser winds for awhile so that it was as if genii warred, their feet trampling trees and bushes in the fury of their strife, while unseen things in the air shrieked and screamed and tore. But all that strife passed as suddenly as it came when the strange spot of white light which sailors call the eye of the storm, appeared high overhead; a moving thing that was like a smaller noonday sun rushing with incredible speed to the east. And after that the rain. It was a sheet of furious water that swept upon us with fury, that poured from ragged black clouds and rebounded so that it seemed as if white spray leaped from the earth. And muddy waters appeared and raced furiously to meet, and became wild torrents.

For twenty minutes that fury lasted before the storm demon passed, then it was as though we had awoke from some delirious dream to find calm stars and a placid sky.

Soon there came, walking from the direction of the hill to the south, a man, and he was stained with earth and mud, and in a state of high nervousness. He put aside the glass of milk offered him and fell into a chair on the porch, with his arms hanging

loosely at his sides, his head bent, a picture of dejection. When at last we heard his tale and came to know that all the turmoil we had passed through was only the fringe of things, we could find no words. Over the hill, fifteen or more, he said, lay hurt and unable to move, and one woman had been killed outright. Besides that, he told us, there were many who needed help, many who were homeless, some who had lost everything.

Now the place from where this man came is of no importance. It has not even a name on the maps, is almost abandoned to bareness; it is one of ten thousand similar settlements in this land, places through which you dash in an automobile without as much as a passing glance, perhaps with a mild wonderment why people gather in such corners with the hope of scratching an existence from the unpromising soil. Often the people living in such places are dull and heavy of aspect, hopeless folk with no defined place in the world, men and women who know nothing of the great emotions, of adventure and ambition. In such a spot Fate had played her sorry jest while spiritless folk stood dumb and bewildered.

Had that cloud of which I spoke been the shadow of some gigantic ship, and had a huge anchor been dropped, to drag, finding no hold, some such devastation might have been made. For here the base of the anchor might have crumbled things into fragments, there the tremendous flukes of it might have torn up trees by the roots; might have so fantastically twisted oaks and walnut trees with stems like temple pillars, might have so tumbled tall timber into heaps that looked like awful prehistoric things. Here the thing had struck, to rebound and fall crashing onto

a dwelling house, leaving little but hopeless splinterings; there the flukes of it had torn away roofs and walls to leave a floor; yonder a rain cistern had been lifted and flung against a tree as by a vindictive hand. As though it had been an object of sublime hatred, a colt had been dashed to death against a stump. A mere shell of a house, a thing patched with rusty tin and odds and ends, had escaped, for it stood not more than ten yards from the path of devastation. But near it, an indescribable fiendishness had wrecked the efforts of years, killing the livestock, stripping the garden, maiming everyone from the nursing child to the old grandmother. Only one had escaped, the husband and father, a hollow cheeked man with deep-set eyes, one of the many who know nothing in life but toil and hardship and unendurable poverty. He stood amongst the wreckage of his hopes, and his sorrows made me say something that meant nothing, and certainly could not take the sting from his bereavement. It amazed me to hear him say: "It's bad enough, but it might have been worse."

To find the matter for a grain of gratitude in that welter of ruined prospects spoke of an optimism foreign to me.

Musical Matters

THE commercialism of the age gets in its fell work whether in the fields of literature, drama, art or music. It is music that I have on my mind just now. The public appreciates good music when it can get it. You see that for yourself if you attend the Symphony Orchestra. "Ah! But that," you say, "is an especially arranged affair and attracts those having a taste for that kind of thing." Let that be granted. Go elsewhere. Well, in a moving picture theater, I heard a capable orchestra conductor render Rubinstein's Kammenoi Ostrow and the audience listened with close and appreciative attention. Or talk with any phonograph record salesman and you will find that there is a call for such things as Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies, portions of Wagner's Tannhäuser and much of Mendelssohn's work. Then, as ordinary concert numbers for solo work there are certain pieces that never fail to please, such as Raff's Cavatina, Schumann's Warum, Handel's Largo, Schubert's Am Meer. Café orchestras again put on with success such numbers as Grieg's Anitra's Dance, Sinding's Rustle of Spring, Arensky's Basso Ostinato. When these are played, you will see cargoes of soup spoons held in mid-air and catch open mouthed listeners in the act of æsthetic contemplation. The super-musical intelligentsia may lift a scornful lip at mention of the titles above listed, but they are good enough for a start, and public appre-

ciation of them is a good sign. For all that, there is reason to believe that in far too many cases the orchestra conductor has fought a good fight with the short-sighted utilitarian who has the strangle hold, the financier of the concern, and has rebelled at his suggestion that the programme had far better be filled with numbers in which imbecility and vulgarity strive to out-rival one another. "Give the people what they want. It pays," he cries with arrogant contempt for the baton's point of view, nor does it dawn upon him that he falsely measures the minds and tastes of others with his own swinish bushel. For, mind you, it does not take brains to make money. Many a millionaire comes perilously near the line where idiocy begins. Yet at times, such a one is in a position to dictate because he has the strangle hold, and so we have forced upon us mentally murderous stuff in the name of "jazz," hysteric sensuousness in the name of "negro music" and poor mechanical work sans rhythm and melody, but with an intolerable deal of tom-tom beating that is supposed to be representative of native Indian music, and foreigners and uninformed men therefore believe and often declare, that America has no music and no musicians.

Now a Sunday or so ago it came to pass that the organist of a certain Episcopal church had a date with the leading lady of his choir, and persuaded me to take his place—that is at the organ and not with the lady. The music he laid out for me I rejected, playing something else of my own choosing and it was so effective that, after the service, the minister sought me in the vestry, and, as I backed out of my surplice, he spoke feelingly of the eleva-

tion of soul he had sustained. Further, three charming old ladies waylaid me in the aisle to say something about the power of sacred music to soothe a crying heart. Close to the poor box, a banker of benign appearance buttonholed me seriously, then released me again, and, stroking his belly, made congratulatory noises in his throat wherefrom I gathered that I was to be envied and blessed because of noble aims nobly undertaken, whereby his feelings ascended and his mind expanded, or sentiments to that effect. A young lady, too, was sweet and asked me the name of the sacred little thing that went like this (humming). Being a man and a liar, and having ulterior motives, as shall presently transpire, I said, "Cherubini, you know." "Oh, yes," said she. "I thought it was familiar." So all went very well and I did more of the same kind of thing at the evening service and exalted the entire congregation with a crashing recessional, very fortissimo.

Now had I told the minister, the old ladies, the benign banker and the sweet flapper the titles of the compositions they so much admired, and had I said that the music was not sacred at all, and had I said that it was really "darkey" music, and had I said that the composer hailed from Texas, their united religious ecstasy would have vanished as vanishes in the forepart of every week, the princely emolument I derive from the writing of these reflections. Yet, what I played was in itself very beautiful. The melodies were winsomely, weirdly sweet, the harmonies subtle, intricate and beautiful. Merely, I made slight changes in the tempo to suit the exigencies of the occasion. The titles of the pieces I played were these: Swing Low Sweet Chariot,

Nobody Knows the Trouble I Sees, You Jes' Will Get Ready, You Gwine A Die. During the communion I played, very pianissimo, Hark From de Tombs, I Sees Lawd Jesus a Comin' and Sinner, Don' Let This Harves' Pass. The titles if previously known, would have shocked the congregation and the minister would have had the spiritual jim-jams. David Guion was the composer. But consider, had a programme been printed and the same titles put into Spanish or Italian, or merely indicated as Opus 9 No 1, and the putative composers listed as Stravinsky, or Ravel, or Scriabin, or Elgar, or Schubert—how then?

In ye Goode Olde Days

WITHOUT overmuch comment, I want to call your attention to a few extracts from a little book I picked up in a secondhand dealer's place in Arkansas. The work is entitled *How the Young Should Act*, and was originally published in Boston. The year is not given. Here are the Rules to be followed when a Good Visitor Comes:

1. You should not read when a grown up person is in the Room, for that is impolite. When Mature Persons talk, they give forth Wisdom and the Proper Youth must hearken, not looking in the Person's face, but with folded hands, being discreet, for thus the Person will feel interesting.

2. When a Person visits the House, the Boy of the House should stand before the Person in an Easy Manner with one Hand in the breast of his Waistcoat and the other under the Flap thereof.

3. If the Person moveth, the Boy should push his chair after him that he may at all times sit down.

Then there are certain table manners to be observed, and the boy still seems to be the goat. For example:

The Model Youth must at all times say "No" when asked to partake of a Nice Thing especially if there be not much, nor is he at any time to ask the Price of Dainties. Nether shall he drink from the Milk Jug, nor, standing upon his Chair, reach across the Table lest he

be counted Ill Bred. If he wishes a serving from a Dish, he shall not stamp nor whistle, but shall look thoughtfully upward until perchance the Master of the Table hitteth upon the Thing. Also he will beware how he eateth, lest the sweet Things or Jambs smear his Countenance.

It would appear from what follows that when the meal was finished the Boy was left behind. In the case of an absent-minded host and a hungry Boy, that was doubtless a merciful arrangement. The Rules prescribed certain things that the Boy is to do when "the Company removes itself from the board and disposes itself to thought."

The Boy must later enter the Room wherein the People are disposed. going quietly and not looking Merry lest the Host be not pleased. (Dyspepsia seems to be hinted at, you will observe.) He shall not sit by his Sister but rather speak modestly to the Daughter of the House.

A Good Girl must not laugh nor speak until she is spoken to. She must neatly arrange her frock and look before her not seeming to be eager of the Conversation of the grown up Persons. Watch that the Smile remaineth pleasant, and, if the Host speaketh, say sweetly, "Yes, kind sir," and courtesy prettily. Perhaps the Master of the House will ask you to recite some lines from the Poets, or Dryden, which soundeth well at all times."

Why "the poets or Dryden?"

The Boy, too, is considered, for this intellectual bear-baiting seems to have been a popular society sport.

1. When the Master of the House inquireth into the studies of the Boy, he should offer willingly to work out

some Arithmetick question that the Master may propound, or recite the Lesson and speak well of the schoolmaster.

2. No Good Boy or Girl should finger the Books that be Layed evenly on the Table for your Good Hostess hath put them there in order that they may please the Eye. Neither praise the Things that you have at Home, but, speaking of them, decide that they are Inferiour, for thus the Good Hostess will be more pleased with what she hath.

Apparently, having the ritual well carried to this point, the Good Boy is released, and in three moves we get this:

The Visiting Boy shall admire the Structure of the House and praise the Flower beds. It is also seemly to ask if he may pluck a Rose that he may bear to the Master of the House. If the Boy of the House hath a Pony or a Dog, the visiting Boy shall politely ask him to ride it. Meanwhile the Vistor Boy shall run by his side and speak kind words to the animal or discreetly touch the Furnishings thereof, and when the Boy of the House hath shown the merits of the animal, the visiting boy shall doff his cap, and, thanking him, bow.

Then follows the Reward for the Good Boy.

If the Youth hath done all well and brightly, the Good Host may be so well pleased that on leaving, he may hand the Boy a bright new penny. If this be and the Host asketh, as he well may, what the Boy shall do with the Gift, he should answer that it will be given to the Church. Thus will the Host be well pleased. But if your behaviour is not as it should have been the Cloud will gather when you are at Home for the Wise Man has written Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child. But at the door the Master of the House may smile on the Good

Boy or lay his hand on his Head and the boy shall say in these words "Kind sir, I thank you and your generous house is well remembered." or other pretty words that your Father may teach.

All of which shows beautiful Manners, but a most uncomfortable ritual for the child.

Parents Only

WE live in doubting times. Just now we are doubting the authenticity of the Opal Whiteley writings, just as a little while ago we voiced our disbelief in Daisy Ashford, and refused to believe that the boy Horace A. Wade wrote his thriller. We are quite ready to admit that little ones dance naturally, with a grace no grown up can compass, we concede that a boy will outrun a man, we know that the imagination of a child is active from daylight to dark, but there we stop. We refuse to admit that the child is superior to the man in intellectual achievement. The truth is that because the adult is full of pettinesses, hypocrisies and shams, he does not understand that he has left originality, honesty and ambition behind him. He has forgotten his own youth. He has forgotten the Heaven that lay about him in his infancy. He has forgotten the ideals he once held.

When nature is close to us, we develop, not only physically, but intellectually. The artistic nature also expands. I have seen pictures drawn by untaught six-year-olds that would put to shame much that appears in the illustrated pages of the daily papers, just as I have seen bones and tusks carved by men who lived in the glacial epoch, say fifty thousand years ago, and many of us today cannot do as well as either the child or the cave man. Also I have read stories written by children that were superior to some of the stuff that appears in magazines. Musically too children are ahead of the average adult. I remember David Guion who Percy

Grainger, the musical critic, listed as one of America's foremost composers, when David was a little lad of seven, in a Texas town, playing with real understanding Chopin and Schumann and Beethoven.

Consider. In the child, the brain is a properly functioning organ. It is forever investigating, creating, examining. In a few short years the child learns, with incredible ease, to walk, to talk, to play, to imagine, to think, to read, to question fearlessly, to express its honest unbiased opinion, to weigh ideas and to parade its prejudices. Then it is seized by its natural enemies, the grown ups, and put to school. From then on, original thought is impossible. Ratiocinative processes are suspended to a large extent. Authority is substituted for independent verification. The walls of conventionality begin to arise about it. The fear of public opinion is born. Throughout the school years the pressure increases. Then, later, come the newspaper and relatives, the church and the law, prohibitions and upliftings, repressions, theories and duties. So the youth passes into the workaday world, where, to do as one is bid, becomes the rule. Then comes marriage and the limitation of human society. There is the mental vacuity of the fireside and the gossip of the neighbors. By this time the brain has become dwarfed, cramped, permanently disabled. It has resolved itself into something very akin to a vestigial organ just as one's legs would had they not been used for a life-time. Rigorous thinking has become impossible, and the man gives up in despair. He has become a dull, gray, unoriginal, fearing thing that has forgotten the paradise that lay in his own past. His condition accounts for his disbelief in juvenile ability.

Moderns and Ultra-Moderns

A MOMENT ago I put aside a magazine after trying, but in vain, to read what purported to be a story written by Gertrude Stein. Its title ran *If You Had Three Husbands*, but what it was all about I do not know. It was jumpy and disconnected, like a nightmare conversation, or a madman's talk. Here is a sample taken from the chapter called *Length of Time*:

"Pleasant days.

So to speak.

Sand today.

Sunday.

Sight in there.

Saturday.

Pray.

What forsooth.

Do be quiet.

Laugh.

I know it.

Shall we?

One must be willing.

"If one loves one another by that means they shall not perish. They frequent the same day and nearly it was six months apart."

But, mark you, I have not chosen the passage for its special and distinct mysteriousness. The entire installment was quite as wild and whirling and incomprehensible. Reading it, I was reminded of a tre-

mendously long paragraph, thousands and tens of thousands of words long, at the latter part of *Ulysses*, by James Joyce, the day dreamings of a woman. The passage twisted and turned, shot off at tangents, looped here and there, raveled and twined in a way beyond belief. Well, Gertrude Stein's story is like that. After a page you are obfuscated by the literary debauch. You haven't a leg left to stand on. Nor are you helped when Mr. Jean Epstein tells you that that kind of thing shows that "close relations link the kinesthesia of an individual to his sub-consciousness," and find that you have been sampling the work of an ultra-modern.

To come down to bed rock, Gertrude Stein's work is interesting because it is representative of the eccentricities growing out of a modern movement. Sherwood Anderson's work derives from the same movement. So does the work of Waldo Frank, of D. H. Lawrence, of Ben Hecht and many others, and the movement, or fad, or theory, or whatever you choose to call it, is psychoanalysis, and Freud is its chief exponent.

Psychoanalysis largely concerns itself with dreams and the dream life, as we shall see presently. What is most important, just now, is to note the effect it has had on literature, especially fictional literature. For effect it has had, and must make for a certain change, just as other movements and discoveries and theories have changed literary tone; the French revolutionary movement, for instance. Better still, call to mind the reading of a few generations ago which grew out of a fad for the mysterious. Then came a marked literary tone, when men and women delighted in flesh-creeping horrors and

nerve-thrilling tales. Hardly a novel but had its action growing out of the fulfillment of some dark prophecy; hardly a romance but had its pungent horrors; awful-eyed astrologers; skull-faced specters; phantom-like forms; skeletons and corpses; hidden manuscripts with terrible secrets; lurking shadows that concealed untold horrors; dead-cold hands that reached through unsuspected panels and all that kind of thing. The history of forgotten literature is crowded with the names of those who catered to the appetite for mystery—Mrs. Radcliffe, Walpole, Maturin, Beckford, Mary Shelley, Charles Brockden Brown. And all that, as I have said, grew out of a fad for the occult, when any fellow of craft and intrigue could manage to get himself taken seriously; when any vulgar charlatan could set up shop as Diviner, Chartomanticist, Onchymanticist, Geomancer. It would be easy to fill a column with the queer names the pseudoscientists gave themselves.

Of course, the good folk of that day never for a moment suspected their own deplorable case. The essential tendency of an age is never manifest to the age that harbors it. If the readers who fed on horrors thought about tendencies at all, they thought of, and wondered at, the tendencies of the sixteenth century when there was all the excessive discursiveness of the pastoral school, with an idyllic world of flower-spangled valleys inhabited by youths and maidens who played at sheep-herding and who conversed in rhymed iambics. *Satisfied with their literary diet of horrors, they bestowed swift contemptuous judgment upon the former age, no more seeing their own follies than we of today see ours.*

And we certainly are not conscious of our own

strange reverence for the mysterious. If you doubt that, tell the first ten men that you meet that our present-day literature shows a queer tendency because of our superstition, and nine out of the ten men will stand aghast. Not only that, but there will be energetic protest, especially—and here is the strange thing—especially if your men are those proud of their enlightenment, if they are those given to talk in resonant phrases of the necessity for freeing the masses from their chains and opening their eyes to “bunk,” if they are of the sort to talk large about the dull complacency of the Victorians, unsuspecting the fierceness of Carlyle and Ruskin and Morris and Kingsley and Mill. But suppose you go on with your experiment, regardless of the baleful eye bent upon you, and point out the popularity of the mascot with ball teams. You will be met with the true statement that that is nothing but a light joke adding to the gayety of nations.

But you counter to that, as it were, mentioning the Zetetic society established to prove the flatness of the earth; or the Koreshites of Florida and their belief that the world is a concave sphere on the inside of which we live; or the spiritualists and their active propaganda. Those examples will probably be pooh-poohed and thrown out of court as evidences of mental ailments peculiar to a weak folk, or dismissed as something disreputable to human intelligence. But mention some such thing as the Abrams business where there seems to be delicate machinery involved, or talk about the possibility of sending radio messages to the inhabitants of Mars, or refer to Professor R. H. Goddard who wants to shoot a rocket to the moon, or bring in Dr. Steinach with his

rejuvenation scheme, or Dr. Charles Ross and his invention, the motion of which is to be controlled by the human eye, and then your men will register respect. So also will they believe in the correspondence schools and their ability to instruct anyone in the proper thing to do when a spoon falls to the floor, or how to manage a railroad. And there is abundant reason to believe that a good many of your ten hypothetical men will stand firm in their belief in the virtue of rattlesnake oil as a cure for chronic deafness, or in the efficacy of pads to cure indigestion, or in a patent nostrum to destroy catarrh germs, or in an easy way to cure epileptic fits—if your men did not believe in such advertised stuffs, it is difficult to see why manufacturers should buy space in a weekly of wide circulation the purpose of which is to destroy "bunk." But of all things mysterious and wonderful, the Freudian theory of psychoanalysis would be held in deepest reverence. Of all clever talkers, those people who have for their subjects complexes, the controlling force of the Censor, the sublimation process, the subliminal and the supra-colliminal—these would be most listened to because of their weird terminology and the mysterious non-understandable for which Tom, Dick and Harry have such deep respect.

I say the mysterious non-understandable because the psychoanalysts, like the old-time phrenologists, profess to read the inner man like an open book writ large. To them nothing is hidden, and the hyper-normal and the subnormal functions of the mind are clear as crystal. Moreover, their names have a strange ring, and to the swallower of new things they seem to be the cream of the cream of foreign

intelligence. Just like the old-time dealers in the occult, their discoveries seem to open up a new field of romance, and should the men agog for a new thing venture far enough into the *arcana*, there is the ever-fascinating will-o'-the-wisp of mysticism. So, because of some, or of all of these things the most incredible inanities, the most preposterous notions are being swallowed. Fads are elaborated into theories, the new thing presently finds its way into literature, under the wave of popularity good things are temporarily submerged, and the rising generation must pay the piper.

But the popularity of psychoanalysis is by no means entirely due to the love of sensation and the hunger for the mysterious. There is something besides the froth to account for its popularity. There is a residue when you get down to the bottom, and that residue is sex-interest. It is not the erotic, *per se*; that has been handled time and time again, often with delicacy and tact. It is something else, and the product ranges all the way from the stupidly vulgar to something very like the offering up of abominations in the name of art. To cite an example—Ben Hecht's fantasy, which brought burdens to author and publisher. Indeed it cannot be gainsaid that those with taste for things pornographic find much in psychoanalysis, very much, for in the movement are writers whose work when considered as literature is beneath contempt, yet who seem to handle filth with the same ease and unconcern with which the stable cleaner handles the ordure and shearn to which he has become accustomed by usage. And of course there are publishers who will handle almost anything likely to enjoy a skyrocket career.

Strangely enough, the literary exponents of the new fad pretend to interpret Nietzsche, wrenching that saying of his which he placed into the mouth of his Zarathustra into queer shapes: "Since humanity came into being, man has enjoyed himself too little." I say, wrenched the saying into strange shape, because there are novelists who have taken enjoyment to mean something very much like abandonment to crude desire. The plots of their books are almost entirely concerned with the gratification of sex. Consider Floyd Dell and his novel which was recently withdrawn from circulation, by way of instance. And there are W. L. George, Evelyn Scott, Joyce, Norris, Frank Harris, Sherwood Anderson.

For Nietzsche, be it said, imposed a severe discipline upon men and aimed at the mental, moral and bodily development of the individual to the end that a race might be evolved as superior to ours, as ours is superior to the Jagons of Tierra del Fuego. Certainly the fictional characters portrayed by the psychoanalytic novelists are far removed from any sort of discipline. Indeed, it is laughable to think of Nietzsche the self-asserting aristocrat so scornful of the lower types, so impatient of the weak and the sick in mind and body, interesting himself in the neuroses of diseased individuals and seeking opportunities "which should be given to the accentuated traits of our nature," to quote Tridon. And in Tridon's words much is hidden that does not at first meet the eye.

For if it means anything, it means that society should adopt a new ethics by which a use shall be found for everything. It sets aside the sound and proved belief that the destruction of tainted stock

will leave a race the better for its removal. It means, in effect, the reign of that sloppy sentimentality by which a foolish parent would refuse to chastise a self-willed child.

Carrying the idea to its logical conclusion, society would seek out for a kind of public petting, each and every morbid deviation from the true type. That certainly is not Nietzscheanism, or I have badly misread that self-assertive philosopher.

Reflection

[T is mighty good to be here in the hills in these days, especially in early morning when the light is golden and rose, and a thousand blackbirds are singing as if their throats would burst for joy. There's a glory of color, when the sun climbs higher, and the grass is all violet shadows where the light dancing through the trees makes a gay arabesque. The hills are a mass of dark foliage spotted with silver-green and gold-yellow, and the sky is turquoise, flecked with white. It is a world of the richest hue of health. And very beautiful is the valley westward where it narrows to a tree-bordered gorge. The sheep give a note to that place, for it is their favorite grazing spot at this time of the year. The cows prefer the singing brook where it widens to a shallow pool. There they stand, half the day, very calm, very philosophical, with a "Nothing is amiss" air about them. I think that they hold the souls of old-time anchorites and haunt this place of ancient silence so that they may continue those meditations which were interrupted by death. Or perhaps they are the spirits of those who worshipped in groves, continuing their worship through the ages as the old buccaneers, Drake and Hawkins and Cavendish and their fellows, continue their sea adventures in the bodies of the Mother Carey chickens, as every sailor knows.

There have been much sorrow and loss and pain in these ends of the earth, what with floods and

storms and cyclones, what with rain and hail and wind, and then frost. But, most happily, we folk who live in the mountains have been kindly dealt with. We have known of storms that passed east and north and south of us, so close indeed that the fringes of them brushed us, and once there was an hour of beating rain. But it ended as suddenly as it began, and it was strange to go out the moment the rain stopped, and see the moon riding in a clear sky, though north-east there were lightnings, and the low rolling of thunder. That was the night of severe wind-storms when damage was done in parts of Kansas and also central Arkansas. Another night there was the sound of rushing wind high in the sky, though in our valley we suffered nothing but a brisk breeze which blew down a rose arbor. At such times it is easy to understand why imaginative people among primitive folk tell tales of genii, and spirits, and demons who ride over the world. Better crook the knee than invite their malignant attention. For their malice is boundless, their malevolence unending, their destructive cruelty infinite. And, their wrath stirred, out from far-away mountain caves they leap, dragging from deep abysses the winds of destruction, and lightnings like sword blades that flash from horizon to horizon; and vast fuliginous clouds, and lashing rains, and screaming cyclones and relentless forces from hell; and heavy palls of ashy gray to cover the sky. So they zigzag over the world, these demons, and grinning death rides behind them. And little Man, patient, industrious, planning Man sees his works swept away in an hour—all vanished like gossamer before a breath. . . . But, and it's the

hopeful, ever striving, never collapsing in despair. For some high and splendid secret is in his heart, a secret that urges to energy and usefulness and activity—good to live by and strength giving. Strong, courageous, gallant Man! Man with the heart of flame!

Sheep Shearing

WE sheared the sheep yesterday, Jimmie O'Neill and I, and we played Argentine-life while doing so. For J. O'N. was a comrade of mine, years ago, down in the Gallegos country, and when we met by chance in Arkansas, a little time ago, he said to me and I said to him and we both said to one another that when shearing time came around we'd foregather. So we did. And we brushed shoulders with the past, talking of Bill Downer and Little Billy who turned bushrangers, of Dick Peter-Luga who could ride anything on four legs, of the wreck of *La Victoria* in Possession Bay, of the white scoundrel who put strychnine in the blubber of a stranded whale and thus killed five hundred Indians for the bounty of two dollars for a right ear. We recalled *galpons* where fifty men sheared sheep and the click of the shears made merry music, and the shouts of the men at the wool press, and the chorus of twenty thousand sheep newly brought into the corral by the riders, and half a score of barking sheep-dogs, and the badinage of shepherd and shearer as they gave each other gibe for gibe and word for word. It was a care-free though hard life; up at five to dress in a scowthering wind, seeing to the comfort of the horses, scrambling for breakfast—a huge one of scalding black coffee and fried mutton and bread like a block. Coarse food ill-cooked, our beds a sheepskin, for blankets a fur robe, hard and long days

of working or riding, a never-ending wind so strong that one could lean against it, money lightly valued because youth seemed eternal. Or days at sea in a schooner with the joy of the wind and water, the combers reaching up and curling white over rail and deck, the music of creaking blocks and lashing sail, the sight of a swooping albatross riding up the wind without a move of the wing, the gulls crying their wild cries, the rounding of a point to come to where a big green sea was running hard. There were notable ships down there in the coasting trade, some of them having been in the American East India service in the thirties. And there were notable men too, old skippers like Captain Pritchard, who knew every nook and shoal from Buenos Ayres to Ancud—Captain Saunders, he must have been a stately man in his prime, for he stood well over six foot four in his sixties, as sturdy an old sinner as ever dodged Davy Jones' locker—Nilson of the *Martha Gale*, yellow-haired like a Viking, thinking nothing of heading his ship into an Antarctic gale when every rope was like ice and sails like iron—young Blomgren, never happy except he was entertaining his friends and his craft bright and shining with glass and brass and clean paint, his deck as yellow-white as the floor of a housewife's kitchen. And there was French Louis, he was something of a pirate; and Ned Williams who was killed in a fight with Indians; and the remittance man Case who borrowed money and horses and clothes of every good-hearted fellow in the land; and Jim who died on the *veldt*, all of them more or less connected with the sea and ships, either as good men or as bums who made themselves very good company because they were such very bad workmen.

So Jimmie and I sheared the sheep in the old style, not tying their legs but leaving them free, neither of us without a certain genuine admiration at our own skill; beginning the job with a quick clip behind the ewe's head, then slipping down the right shoulder, along the back and around the rump, and so back to the left side with shears in the left hand now, left neck, left shoulder, left side, the fleece falling off beautifully like an overcoat and the sheep getting to its feet, somewhat astonished, clean and white and close-clad as if in underwear. And we, mind you, radiant with cheerfulness. When I said that I yearned to ride the pampas again, J. O'N. laughed. "It's your vanished youth you yearn for," he said. It was a good and true saying, and we took a drink because of it.

The Year

SO comes the New Year, and, for a moment there are good resolutions, and warm handclasps, and high expectations. For man is as he is—a creature of high purpose but of weak resolution. Aspiring to godlike freedom, he is a sorry slave. This very machine of civilization that he has built returns upon him, seizes him, rends him, grinds him in its cogs.

Put him out where nature is near, and he grows kindlier. The things about him draw him to the mirror of his imaginings. The whisperings and murmurings that nature makes, stir him to thought, but in the rush and fever of the town, such moments are almost unknown, save when on evanescent occasions, music soothes him, or the message of the poet touches his heart. But in the lap of nature the symphony is never ending and ever changing, and there is no shock of sudden silence. The melody becomes a part of the hearer, fills him with veneration. But it is a melody ever the same and yet never the same, a melody that holds a message and a meaning, whether it be in the crescendo of the gathering storm or in the faint whisper of the breath of the early dawn: but a melody that cannot be captured and set down; the despair of musicians who would fain reproduce the emotions awakened in them, even as the deep sapphire and rose and gold of the evening sky as it pales to amethyst, is the despair of the painter who would throw it on his canvas. So man, bound Ixion-

like to his wheel, slave to that which he himself has made, eternally hopes but eternally suffers.

A Happy New Year! The words are not empty or meaningless. They come from the heart wherever spoken and there is a strange wistfulness as they are uttered. God in his heaven must sigh as he hears the chorus of hope.

Man in his world! This little creature, man, full of high hope and incredible meanness, of immense possibility and small achievement, who soothes the hurt this moment, to slay the next, a creature that lies, cheats, steals, wastes, destroys, gorges—a filthy despicable brutish being—a Yahoo, a hideous Struldbrug—and yet again, a weaver of wonderful dreams, an enthusiast for justice, a creature of integrity of heart, a lover, a being of courage, of kindliness, of patience, of genius, devotion, loftiness of aim and full of sympathy. Patient and energetic, zeal, genius, wealth, labor he will cast into the cause of the world's progress, carefully he will build, cautiously plan, then in an hour, see the forces of destruction crush his high hopes and neutralize his best efforts.

Just a little world he has, a tiny ball in space, and but a short time in which to enjoy the thin wedge of light that lies between dark and dark, and yet by his own thoughtlessness or ignorance there are blood and tears, and destruction and failure, and cross purposes and useless strivings. Poor dweller in the "haunted valley of defeated dreams!"

A Happy New Year! God grant it. A Happy New Year to you, and yours, and to all of us; to the hunted criminal and the tortured prisoner; to the woman of the street and to her sister in silk and silver, to the bronzed worker scorched by the furnace

fire and to the dreamer of dreams. For there are dark and tempestuous days ahead, and at home, as abroad, there is much of misery and want. That may not be gainsaid. But a day is a day, and a wish is a wish. So, if but for a day, love with full hearts for hearts must die, and, though the wish be vain, yet let us wish.

So, comrades and companions, may it be a year of friendship for you, and may your friend be one with the knightly spirit, frank and outspoken. And may you handle life freely and gallantly. There will be problems to be grappled with, but, also, there will be the joy of victory over them. There will be tasks unaccomplished because of weakness of spirit, but, also, there will be the happiness of renewed intention. There will be tangles, and gritty irritations and petty things, and unhappinesses. And there will be sorrows to be endured, and bewilderments and dark days. But, also, there will be the scarlet and gold of remembered happiness. And there will be other days, may they be many, in which the heart says: "It is good to be here, in this House of Life."

What though highest efforts are frustrated by men of tainted hearts and minds, who scheme and plot and plan, unhappy wights of obliquity of vision and lack of proportion, fellows full of pompous ideas of money and position who blot out a whole world of friendship and good-will and high-spirit because of a coin held to an eye! What of it? It is still yours to walk like a king. It is still yours to disregard whining and complainings, hearing the marching music of the heart. It is still yours to be a warrior-lord, never despairing, contemptuous of trivial things. It is still yours, though bruised and

battered, to fight on, strong, courageous, gallant. It is still yours to follow your own inspiration, careless of the criticisms of others, experimenting in your own way, your mood vigorous and adventurous. And, in the bewildering thicket of daily life, with so many confusing side-lights, what though you lose your Polaris for a little while; you can still retrace your steps.

So to you, my comrades, here's a health; and here's a toast to the indestructibility of friendship! Here's to a wider and a fairer vision! Here's to endurance, and discipline, and a goal!

With all my heart, A Happy New Year!

TALES TRUE AND OTHERWISE

The Cave

AFTER walking more than five miles to see the cave, walking over a dusty road on a day without a breath of wind, I sat outside half inclined to give up the job. Reading a newspaper under the shade of the trees was a far more pleasant way of spending the time than groping in misty places under a hill. An approaching storm cloud settled the matter for me and I stuck away my paper and went in.

I would have felt a little more cheerful had there been other people about, but very few visit the Bat Cave. For one thing, you have to climb down from the tree-shaded road into a kind of gully which is really nothing more than a water course that sweeps down steeply from the mountains, and also, the cave is not a pleasant place to be in. There are no guides and you must pick your way with care in a Rembrandtesque gloom over a floor strewn with rocks which have fallen from the roof. Also here and there are transverse cracks down which a man might fall. Another unpleasant surprise comes about an eighth of a mile from the entrance where the floor rises steeply and suddenly and, going over the ridge, it is a case of crawling on hands and knees, although there is a way around the base of the underground hill. It is about there that you light your candle, and a little beyond, comes a very steep decline, a black yawning stairway down which I did not go.

I started to go down, but found myself walking

ankle deep in swiftly running water, flowing, it seemed, from some opening in the side of which I was unaware. In that pitchy dark, with the cheating light of a candle, it was hard to tell exactly from where the water came, nor was it until I had crossed the passage from side to side, that I realized that the torrent came from the mouth of the cave, sweeping sharply around the base of the little hill over which I had crawled. What was worse, the water became rapidly deeper. Straining my ears, I detected soft, crashing noises. Soon I realized that driftwood was being borne along by the stream, small sticks, branches, and once, a fair sized piece of tree trunk, the last catching me a sharp and painful rap on the knee. Then I remembered the storm cloud I had seen which had made me decide to enter. So I turned to make my way out without any ifs and ands and was suddenly startled into fear at the rush of the water. The force of it shooting down that incline made it a matter of extreme difficulty for me to place my feet and the hold I had on the smooth rocks was highly insecure. Once I found myself slipping. Like a flash I remembered the fissures in the floor and splashed, disregarding lesser fears, to the rise of the little hill.

I was greatly relieved when the top of it was gained and I lay there awhile, stunned, deafened almost with the roar of the waters leaping against and over the rocks. There were thunderings and boomings as the sides of the cave gave back the echoes. Looking towards the opening, in the faint gray light, I saw a fury of boiling waters, white waves which sometimes shot upwards, sometimes struggled as though seeking to regain the outer world.

From the slope at the top of which I was overtaken came a curious whistle that rose to a scream, then a howl. It was like a siren. The noise of it disturbed me curiously, and the perspiration stood out on my forehead. Crouched there, I found myself peering into the gulf of deeper blackness in the black, half fearing that some dreadful thing would leap upon me from the maelstrom. Somehow, I could not clear my mind of the notion that I was on the verge of a cataclysm that would sweep me away. The strange noises in the profound obscurity seemed to betoken the presence of wild and terrible living things unseen by man. The abominable blackness, I felt, was but a curtain which would presently part, to reveal nightmare beasts. For a time I was tortured with a lunatic's dream, a queer impression of living slimy things about me, reaching for me.

A wind swept over, a whirling gustiness that ceased almost as it began. That refreshed, but there came a thought to make my hair stand on end, for the wind had come from within the cave, blowing outwards. At that I did some complicated thinking. Why outwards? Why not the other way? Or was my imagination tricking me?

I asked myself that question over and over again. Over and over again I gave myself the same answer. Displaced air! The idea would not down, and it opened up a long line of possibilities. At the back of my head there was a tumult, a wild effort to make divergent things focus. The water very evidently came from a sudden mountain torrent; a storm had burst. I remembered the position of the opening of the cave and the steep water gully to the right of it. Obviously the torrent was filling the cave which

was not so large as I had imagined. If so, then I was in a pocket of air, a bubble. My position was much as that of a fly in an inverted thimble pressed into a pan of water.

My mind took up another thread of thought. If the water was still rising and if there were other domes like that under which I crouched, domes more capacious and at higher levels, how long would it be before my air bubble was forced farther along by the outward pressure? How long before I was drowned, my body twisted and torn against the roof? The notion urged me to action. In another moment I was crawling down to the water's edge, over the irregularly sloping, rock-littered hill, bruising myself, cutting my hands against the rocks. Nor had I advanced far when I came to water. Bending low, very low, I could see it, an inky black coming out of the void. The rocky walls had gone so that I was a living thing in the midst of nothingness. It came to me with a shock of surprise that the turbulence had ceased. Laying my hand on the water, I found it smooth as a summer pond, yet it was, without doubt, still rising. There was silence too, a silence profound and appalling. It was an unpleasant realization that the waters had risen above the arch between my air chamber and the dome beyond and that I was hopelessly imprisoned. At that I started to crawl back to the highest point, to wait and think.

What greatly puzzled me was that the air did not become oppressive. That was inexplicable. I breathed easily and normally, yet the water was still mounting, my prison steadily narrowing. Against my better judgment I tried to persuade myself that I was mistaken in my supposition and that the flood had

halted, the waters reached their height. So I waited, waited, I knew not for what, my mind in a whirl, yet at utter loss to account for the normal air pressure. But when I felt the water about my feet, I was startled to terror. At the rate of advance my time was obviously short.

Suddenly the thought leapt at me that somewhere the air was escaping. Perhaps through innumerable imperceptible cracks and channels in the limestone, perhaps through some large opening. At once I began a frantic search, passing my hands over the low ceiling here and there, straining to reach beyond ledges and interstices, feeling this way and that, across and across the irregular dome; confused, bewildered by the mystery of darkness. When, so feeling, I chanced upon the end of the candle I had dropped and forgotten, I had a moment of delight, but trying to light it found that the wick was water soaked and hopeless. The brief flare of the match showed the waters a couple of feet away, the narrow dome of my prison arch, but no place high enough to permit me to do other than to kneel. I had a fleeting vision, a dim impression of a semi-circle of black, a gray veil of rock and a pair of glistening stalactites. That was all. Strangely enough my passion of anxiety had passed and almost I seemed to take an objective interest in my situation. Hopeless as the trap was, my mind was clear, was functioning perfectly. As though I were talking the words framed themselves.

"The problem is, where is the escape hole?"

That rang through my mind. I was following a sequence of reasoning. "The water is still rising. The air is not denser. Therefore it is escaping." An-

other thought trod on the heels of that. If the water rose so rapidly, it would doubtless fall with almost equal rapidity. Well and good. I might wait. So, back again I came, the full round to: "the problem is, where is the escape hole." Once, I said that aloud.

In the midst of the vivid realization of my danger the memory of the match flame was pleasant to dwell on. I visualized it, and, oddly enough, thought of one of Hans Andersen's fairy tales. The burst of flame had almost hurt my eyes, and I saw again the fizzing, the way in which the match had first threatened to go out but had caught, flickered, then dropped to a tiny flame that increased and curiously leaned to—

What! Leaned towards me! Why? Why had not the significance of that dawned on me before? Why had I not grasped the purport of it until now? There must have been a draught so faint that I had not noticed it. Obviously. At the thought I ceased to breathe for a heart's beat. Then I wet my finger and brought myself to strict attention. Nothing. Not the slightest change of temperature between one side of my finger and the other.

I struck another match, noting with gladness that I had half a dozen. Again there was the slight leaning of the flame, not much to be sure, but it was decidedly out of the perpendicular. I watched it creep along the stick, always leaning, watched the cinder head glow, bend down, turn black. Carefully I took the match by the burned end, turned it so that the flame leaned to burn along the stick, and followed the course indicated, groping on my knees. I risked another match and it guided me to the edge of the water. With a third the flame changed its course,

leaped straight upward and expired. For awhile I dared not risk another match. My hands were enough. I felt a crevice, thrust into it my arm, extended it stiffly. So I came to a standing position with my head in the hole, then my shoulders. Feeling again above my head, I thought I touched something that was soft and clammy and large, and it moved under the pressure of my fingers. I was positive that it moved, and a chill ran through me. By the light of another match I could see nothing but broken rock, jagged-edged and irregular, and many odd sinister shadows. But still the flame of the match went straight upwards, and there was a faint, hardly perceptible draught, so, clutching as high as possible, I drew myself up, amazed and credulous: clinging, groping.

Somehow, unhesitatingly, I accepted the idea that the opening would lead outwards, back to the comfortable, muddled world of men, where things went wrong. Yet I was prepared for disappointment. The passage might narrow in such a way as to be impassable: it might branch; it might open out transversely or even lead back to the cave. There were odd things that happened to strata at times. At any rate it was a refuge until such time as the waters fell, and certainly the salient evil was escaped. Still I crawled upwards, sometimes going easily for a space, again forced to wriggle as the rocky sides neared one another. There were, now and then, desperate struggles. At times I was in agony of discomfort, bracing myself with knees against smooth rock, my back against knobs and projections, and at times, for quite long distances, the ascent was no more difficult than going up a ladder, often easier in fact because of the back rest.

Once, looking up, I saw a strange speck of blue light, a mere glint which I knew to be the sky. Moving slightly, I lost sight of it again. I stayed as near as possible to the same spot for at least a minute, craning and stretching to see it again, but I did not catch it. So I went on.

A few yards more and the blackness had disappeared and there was all about, a ghostly gray, so that I could discern the rocks. I was then climbing at a steep angle, through a narrow passage of broken rock full of ledges and deep indentations. Suddenly the crack above broadened out and I saw the sky with the outline of a bush silhouetted black. Up I went joyfully. Then:

“Tr-r-r-r! Tr-r-r-r!”

I saw the thing and I heard it, and a sudden faintness was at my heart. I slipped, recovered and halted again, panting in fear, alert though unstrung. For a long time I dared not move and the noise of a loose stone I had dislodged which went rattling downwards, made me gasp. It seemed that it might disturb strange things.

It was a long time before I dared move. I was doubtful of my courage. Presently, leaning as far back as I could, holding myself in such position that I might dodge downwards, I went up very stealthily. When I again reached the flat, shelf-like rock, my ear very vigilant, I edged far over to the right, jamming myself into a rock crevice. Though I knew what I would see, the sight of the slit-like, pitiless eye of the rattlesnake nauseated me. Even as I looked, a second and a third of the reptiles slid past as if floating. Very far away then looked the light of day.

I dropped lower again, and my head swam while I listened rigid. I had the queer sensation that the world had turned upside down and that I would fall out and into the immensity of space. The gap of bright blue seemed to turn dark and I think that for a moment I lost consciousness. Yet I was frozen in my attitude. I feared that if I moved, from the flat rock there would come, falling, hissing, writhing, hundreds of abominable, clammy things, and I had to steel myself to fight against the fear and horror that possessed me. From above, came soft sibilant noises.

Presently the lurking danger challenged me to effort and I fought with my imagination. I fancied that if I did not conquer my panic, I would be conquered at the moment of victory. The cave of waters came to me as a thing very, very far away in point of time.

My mind leaped to the remaining match, and my tense excitement gave way, although it was some moments before I could summon resolution to make a move. At last I braced myself with feet, knees and back, and, my hands being free, took my newspaper, twisted it in the form of a torch and struck my last match. The paper burned bravely, and cautiously climbing, holding the flare well above me, I gained my old place. On past it, and still higher, until I could see the writhing mass, evil-eyed and sluggish, dozens of them. The sight made my heart jump. I nerved myself, thrust the blazing paper on to the stone shelf and saw the reptiles in the far corner challenging.

A half minute later it was all over. A foot on the rock, square in the middle of the flame, a gathering

of my strength and a leap, and I had the stem of an oak sapling in my grasp. A moment after I was on the wet grass, flat on my face in a state of hysterical agitation, patting the earth and kissing it. The sight of a haystack through a gap in the confusion of trees was sweet and the rain-washed air went through me like new wine.

Temple d'Arana

AT Vera Cruz, last summer, there was much talk of one named Kitteridge, a young fellow who had left there for Honduras, apparently. Some said that he had gone treasure hunting, others that he was simply loafing, rusting, slipping through life with a minimum of friction. Then, a sailor whose schooner had touched Ampero Island, told in the wine shops that he had seen Kitteridge decked in barbaric finery, walking under a canopy of feather work borne by natives. That seemed to me the most outrageous of fairy stories, but the banker for whom he worked, held that it was very like him. "The fellow was always mooning," he said. "Lazy to the backbone: a piano playing, poetry reading fellow." He went on to tell what he had done for Kitteridge, and what he said was in illustration of the goodness of his own heart—the old Pecksniff.

Now as it happened, I had three hundred dollars to spare and plenty of time to boot, and it struck me that a fine colorful story might be written about this fellow who had drifted from Cleveland, Ohio, to a land of lotus eaters, so I told Nilson of the *Markin Gore*, and he made room for me and my duds aboard his schooner,.

Two days later I was set ashore at Chihuano, and, as I stepped off the crazy mole, I cast a look seaward, to see the three-master scudding swiftly for

the open, for Nilson had merely hove to and did not drop anchor. The sun was full on the silver-white sails, and the leaping foam against the black hull seemed to be hastening the ship into the blue beyond the headland, a fleeing it seemed, as a living creature flees from the thing it fears. I caught a glimpse of shining brass and the sound of the ship's bell and then my heart sank, for a glance shoreward told me that I was in for a stay in a jungle village. Two general stores, three dozen thatched houses, a brown sluggish river that came from swamp land, two or three wine shops, barefooted men and women, a church and a padre, little to eat besides fruit—I knew how it would be, and so it was, as I found in less than half an hour's walk.

There was, as there always is in such places, a Hotel International; a long, one-storied building painted white, with a ramshackle veranda, black and bare windows, and a general air of unwholesomeness about it. I saw the cavernous doors of it from the mole, a door and a window to each bedroom, each door with its three wooden steps giving on the sidewalk. As I neared, I heard the sound of piano playing from within and the hand was the hand of a man. I asked the fat man who sat at the open door whether the player was an Americano, but he shrugged his shoulders, lit a cigarette and took no more notice of my question, so I went in.

Now the barroom was empty of men, but it gave on an open door in the farther corner, and from there came the sound of the music, so I passed through to an inner chamber. There I found three gathered and the atmosphere was a haze of tobacco smoke. The pianist was, in spite of his careless pipe

and old clothes, evidently a man of some culture, for seeing me, a stranger, enter, he came to his feet and held out a hand of greeting saying, "My name is Kitteridge," and it startled me to find my quest ended as soon as begun. There was an eager impulsiveness in his manner which reminded me of the way of a man in a lonely place when he meets another unexpectedly. After a trivial hesitation, he indicated his companions. "Fowler—Bill Fowler: once of San Angelo, Texas, now owner of the Chihuano Lighterage Company. And the other is M. Mattlitche, proprietor of the Hotel International," and Kitteridge handed me a seat. Mattlitche commenced to talk at once, but Kitteridge dismissed him on a wine bearing errand. Fowler, a bull-necked and red-haired fellow who might have been a pugilist by his appearance, greeted me half ferociously, half surlily. Then the wine came, Mattlitche was dismissed, and the three of us set about establishing relations with one another, in the manner of men of the north who meet in strange places. We talked, drank wine, played cribbage and sometimes made casual and furtive references to one another's intentions, hopes and expectations. It was only when Kitteridge began to talk of the reputed richness of the back country that Fowler showed a kind of dull animosity and grew sullen. "Can't keep nothing to yourself," he growled, and twice his lips repeated that noiselessly.

"But such secrecy is a flagrant absurdity," protested Kitteridge good-naturedly.

I gave a kind of deprecatory cough at that and refilled my glass, for there was truculent suspicion in Fowler's eyes. In some way that I have forgotten,

the subject of an ancient civilization came up later, and Fowler's thrust in like a sword, with a question as to the amount of money I had to spare. He had been pondering deeply for quite a while. When I told them the truth as to the reason of my being there, Fowler's manner changed.

"Your fortune's made," he said in his heavy, creaking voice as he slowly nodded his big head. Then came a long, roundabout tale of his four years' stay in that jungle village; his disastrous financial experiences as owner of a couple of lighters; his learning of the story of a ruined and ancient temple in the interior; his patient effort to make a stake sufficient to finance a private expedition. His slow volubility was exasperating but of his earnestness there was no doubt. The man would have spent a life-time trying to attain his goal. "What's more," he said in conclusion, "me and him has a map—a real map drew by some old Spaniard. Kitteridge's got it." Then he threw himself back in his chair and put his feet on the table with the air of a man who had brought a difficult matter to a satisfactory pass. He had talked like one long pent up, and blew out a heavy sigh of relief when he ended.

All the while Kitt had been sitting with his chair balanced upon two legs, see-sawing back and forth slightly, one arm dangling over the chair back, the other on the table, his long fingers drumming a soundless rat-a-plan. As Fowler finished, I looked at his strange friend, partly by way of inviting confirmation of Fowler's tale, partly to please Fowler.

Kitteridge shrugged his shoulders slightly and his gray eyes seemed to grow larger. There was no note of show-off in what he said, and he quoted with the

air of a man who found what he said to be perfectly appropriate.

"You remember," he said, "but I forgot who wrote it. How does it go?"

'The ample proposition that hope makes
In all designs begun on earth below.
Fails in the promised largeness.' "

Hearing that, Fowler was visibly annoyed. He thumped the table with his heel, put his feet on the floor and sat bolt upright. Two deep little wrinkles came between his eyebrows and his lips tightened. Then came from him rumblings like a gathering storm before he broke out.

"Truth is, Kitt's scared. Everlasting scared. A scared cat and that's all there is to it. Won't get his hands hurt. Afraid of getting a thumb mashed with a hammer. Like a baby, he is. If he hadn't been so scared, we'd have done this here job long ago."

He trailed off in rumblings and mutterings like a threatening storm, too full of suppressed anger for many words, but before he relapsed into silence he shot forth, "Ask him about sand storms. That's what it is scares him. Sand storms. Pooh!"

Fowler's wrath left Kitteridge quite undisturbed.

"When Fowler meddles with my motive, he generally falls into error," he said quietly. "He is hopeful too, and therefore forever getting disappointed. As for the chart, it is fragmentary, incomplete and the story may be merely a romance. But Fowler has read *Treasure Island* and *King Solomon's Mines* and has visions of gold."

As Kitteridge turned over some clothes in the

chest that stood in a corner, in search of the chart, his voice came muffled:

"Of course, I'll admit it's within the bounds of possibility . . ."

Up to then I had been sceptical, but the map gave a new twist to my thoughts. Incomplete as it was to the south, the coast line was remarkably accurate in drawing. Of course, here and there were the curious figures inserted of which the old cartographers seemed so fond, a tiny caravel in full sail, a puffy faced cherub sending a wind from the north-east, a spouting whale, but our attention centered about a marking inland, whereon was inserted the word "arena" three distinct times. That was our bone of contention, Kitteridge holding that what we would find was not a sandy desert, but something very like a monstrous, untidy hot house. "Vast endless forests, great leafy arches, tangled vines and all that sort of thing, but certainly not sand." But Fowler held out for the existence of a desert and I had my work cut out to drown the developing situation in a torrent of talk about ways and means. Then it came out, on a suggestion from Fowler, that we would do well to take Murray with us. Murray, it transpired, was a beach comber living from hand to mouth, a handy man always in hard luck. What made him especially valuable was that once he had started on a similar trip to that now projected, with a man named Loomis, but they had turned back. Murray had "hooked" the map from Loomis in the confusion of parting.

The indigent Murray was produced late that night, and proved to be a shriveled fellow with a bulbous nose and weak chin, certainly the most unlikely

kind of man to pick for a traveling companion. Still he had lived long among the natives and spoke many dialects in a halting fashion, and that was something not to be overlooked. By midnight I had committed myself to the expedition, not only as a participant, but as financier, keeping secret my determination to do much as Loomis had done at the first hint of serious difficulty.

We traveled light, the four of us, carrying little and depending upon the country for our sustenance. My own great fear, at first, was that unseen reptiles might attack me, but after a couple of hours I felt easier and was able to look about me with comfort. In spite of his unprepossessing appearance, the man Murray proved to be a good addition to the party, remembering clearly the way he had followed on the Loomis expedition. Fowler was eager to push on, always overbearing in his manner. His tyrannical disposition put him a little apart from the rest of us and his choleric outbreaks turned many a halt for rest into a time of trouble. It seemed to be his unalterable conviction that Kitteridge was cautious to the point of cowardice and he was pitiless in criticism.

On the morning of the third day we touched a native village which was a huddle of thatched huts by a slow stream. Because ahead lay a swamp jungle, as Murray learned through a hubbub of words, there were bargainings of a sort and the upshot of it was that two natives joined our party as guides. All that day we passed through a spectral swamp forest, wading for hours, sometimes through black, evil-smelling mud that clung like fat, then, for other

hours, pushing and climbing and weaving a way through vegetation that closed thickly upon us. Now and then through chance gaps, we caught sight of a wide, inky river that seemed to run parallel to our course. I was sick and miserable and ready to abandon the enterprise, but I found no supporters. The unaccustomed exertion robbed me of my vitality and I went like one in a dream, my head hanging forward and my arms listless. The eternal conflict of root and vine and tree, the chokings and stranglings and writhings of the jungle sickened me and it was as though we, like all other things there, were being seduced to our doom.

Our Indian guides left us on the evening of the second day after their engagement. For hours they had been sullen and suspicious, and at noon, when Kitteridge left our party for a short while to examine a pitch-like pool, one of the blacks acted in a highly peculiar manner, talking volubly and gesticulating. At nightfall, both flatly refused to go further. Fowler stormed and threatened, and Murray argued with them, but it was energy wasted. Kitteridge, much to our concern, took the side of the savages saying that they had traditions which possibly had some kind of fact behind them. Possibly had it not been for his firmness and coolness, there would have been disaster that night, for when the Indians first refused, Fowler was like a madman, arguing with them in a language they did not understand while he flourished his revolver. But Kitteridge stood there against a tree, his hands thrust deep in his breeches pocket, his legs a little apart, a very determined figure of a man for once. So the Indians turned and left us, saying nothing more, making no

gestures. Into the dark of the forest they went, and their silent vanishing was like something in a fantastic dream. So to me was it all like a dream—the oppressive silence, the languid, odorous air, the strange sense of sluggishness and the mournfulness of the dark. The world seemed to have closed into an everlasting night with no hope of sunrise.

That night there were strange whisperings in the jungle. We had heard something of the kind the night before, but so faintly and for so short a time that we had not been seriously worried. We had dismissed them as mere forest noises. But now it was different. Human voices near, but hushed, came through the air like needles. No sooner had we pricked our ears to listen to a long continued whisper in one direction, than another commenced, coming from the darkness at our backs. As the whisperings increased in number, they seemed to be coming from a steadily narrowing circle and we were curiously constrained to keep silence. The noises of the night birds grew fainter, then ceased. Once, Fowler spoke of firing a couple of shots into the bush and Murray backed him up in a half-hearted kind of way, but nothing came of it. Kitteridge, with an unexpected show of something like anger, accused Fowler of braggadocio, saying that he knew well enough that down there in the dark was hidden danger and that the men of the jungle could send a poison dart through their blowpipes that would forever still the one touched, be it ever so lightly. "A mere scratch," said he, "would be the gate of death, and you know well enough that you cannot fight shadows and unseen things."

After that we were silent for a long time. I, all

ear, crouched low, made myself small in most desperate fear. The dark terrified me, yet I prayed for deeper darkness. A lone firefly shining high on a leaf, made me set my teeth on edge; it tortured my frayed senses like a glaring white, vast exposing light. As the forest was laden with shadows, so was my heart laden with fear. Once when a small insect at my elbow chirped, I started as if at a thunder clap.

It was Fowler who broke the silence of our circle. I could not see him, for he was stretched at full length twenty feet away, but I could well imagine his eyes bloodshot and his face flushed, and his mouth twitching with suppressed anger.

"A coward you are, Kitt," he charged. "A coward born and a coward you'll die. Let us show them blacks we are their masters and they'll let us alone soon enough."

Kitteridge sat close to where I lay and I could see him faintly, white and thin, looking straight in the direction of his unseen accuser. He made no answer, but his silence availed nothing to ward off the storm.

"It's all rot," went on Fowler. "All rot, that there yarn about demons and sand. Sand here! You ought to know better. You educated fellers. Lot o' good your schoolin' does, I'll say."

"You had better take some quinine, Fowler," said Kitteridge evenly.

Fowler let that go unregarded. He was as one pushing to a quarrel and there was provoking insolence in his tone.

"Rot! is what I say. How can sand be a demon? A little further there'll be sand. Sand maybe like what you see in New Mexico from the top of the

Sacramento. The word 'arena' means sand. It's dago for sand. I ain't hung round Mexicans for nothing. We get out of this and hit sand. You see."

"Fowler, you are exasperating," answered Kitteridge softly. "You must not take things too literally. The word 'demon' in the tale may mean almost anything. Not necessarily supernatural. But the other word is different. What we take for 'arena' as meaning sand, may well be 'arana,' which means spiders. A mis-spelling. The change of a single letter. As I piece out the old tale—"

"Spiders!" ejaculated Fowler. "Daddy-long-legs. A new scare, eh?"

"As I piece out the tale," went on Kitteridge, avoiding the offensiveness of the interruption and the tone of the man, "the town we are told of was deserted because of a plague of spiders. There were millions of them, tens of millions perhaps. They were dangerous to men and attacked and fought, and their bite was fatal. So I read, not 'heavy masses of sand,' but 'heavy masses of spiders.'"

I heard Fowler turn as he lay and his voice came as if he faced Kitteridge, whereas before he had been staring into the bush. "Men afraid of spiders," he said.

"Mosquitoes have driven men from places," said Kitteridge as if thinking aloud. "Ants too. Of course the old tale endows them with a kind of intelligence, as though they acted in concert and their aggressiveness grew. That may be poetic exaggeration. Still, it's queer. The story says that they attacked stragglers—children and the helpless old people. Then there were fightings—men against spiders—a war of extermination such as men wage against mosqui-

toes. What I saw when I walked down to the bog, which was what brought the tale to mind and scared the Indians, seemed to me a verification."

"Boogerman," grumbled Fowler, but the word did not seem to come with his usual bluff impudence. Doubtless he was shaken. As for me, hearing all that, it was hard to repress a sigh, and the ghost of a sob was within me. I had to grit my teeth, had to hold my breath awhile.

"There were mummified remains there in that bituminous stuff."

"Shut up," exclaimed the nervous Murray. "It reminds me of what Loomis said, an' we must have been near here when we quit."

"Go on with the ghost story, Kitt," urged Fowler. "Get it out of your craw, whatever it is. You'll feel better when it's over. We'll get there anyway, and this here treasure in the temple—"

"I'm not here for that," put in Kitteridge swiftly. "I'm not brave enough to go through all this for gold, and—"

He ceased suddenly and seemed to be listening intently. Faint as the rustling of grass, we heard the continuous murmurs in the heavy darkness but the sound was no longer the background it had been, no longer an indistinguishable murmur. One deep voice could be plainly distinguished, a voice that was like a softened and interrupted bagpipe drone. It paused frequently and we heard it now from this direction and now from that, as if the voice belonged to someone moving about in the darkness, and moving in a crowd.

"I'd like to get that beggar," murmured Fowler.

After a while Kitteridge continued. "As I see it

now, on that rocky point of land where I was at noon, a little band of men was entrapped. The things that they could not escape, that they could not fight against with weapons, were advancing on them. Some of the men, I suppose, broke away, made a dash for it, doubtless to die. The others went into that bog, into the stinking morass."

"All guess work," said Fowler.

"But it does not follow that the same conditions continue to this day. That is hardly likely. Still to me it explains the old tale. Arana: spiders and not arena: sand."

Kitteridge's voice dropped and the amazing tale left me powerless to move, yet I trembled violently. I watched, most intently, a faint star in the far sky that crept nearer to the edge of a leaf. I hung to that point of light, dared not let it go from my sight. Losing it, I felt as if I would be thrown back on the monstrous thing of four men in a narrowing circle of horror, on the razor edge of open quarrel.

"Kitt, you've got the pluck of a mouse," growled Fowler very softly.

When he said that I felt the earnestness of Kitteridge. It was as though he had determined that Fowler should understand something altogether foreign to his blundering intelligence. His voice was gentle, almost persuasive.

"Fowler, it is almost impossible to make you understand. Perhaps it does not matter so very much. You have always taunted me with cowardice because I was careful of my hands. But I needed them to make music, you see. You were as careful of your eyes. Blindness would have wiped out the world for you. That misfortune would not be as terrible to me

could I still hear. But let that pass. Can you not see, Fowler, that my fear just now is greater than yours because I have imagination and you have none?"

To that, Fowler made no reply, and except for the sullen whisperings in the jungle, there was silence. It was a long time before Kitteridge spoke again. He had not changed his position, and was still sitting bolt upright with the three of us prone about him. He spoke very slowly and as one who carefully weighed his words.

"Yes, Fowler. I am cowardly and afraid. I am afraid as I sit here, for I fear pain, physical pain. Very much I fear it." His voice fell to a whisper. "But I am not afraid of death. It is the struggle for life that I fear, life in which I lose so much—even hope."

A muffled chuckle that was a gurgle came from Fowler, then again the heavy silence. When Kitteridge spoke again his voice was almost as low as the faint whisperings in the jungle that formed a never ceasing obbligato. He seemed to talk with a forced calm, as one under a strain, and there were long spaces between his sentences. Hearing, but not seeing nor knowing, one might have thought the man to have been desperately sleepy and trying to keep awake. The jungle whisperings had ceased, and a profound silence brooded over us.

"Listen, all of you. Whatever you do, make no sudden move. For a long time I have been aware of something living, very close to Fowler. It is a black, heavy shape, evidently a man. When I look his way he vanishes. He has gone now. Wait. He is there now."

There was a very long pause then, and Kitteridge

yawned and stretched his arms stiffly. Not one of us moved a finger. Then we heard Kitteridge again. His voice was the voice of one half strangled by fatigue and sleepiness and he spoke with his head on his chest, but the words came slower, much slower.

"There are eyes too. Human eyes. The jungle men are close to us, all around us. Give no sign of alarm."

The seconds that followed were almost too much for human endurance. I dared not glance to right or left. My star had passed beyond the edge of the leaf so that I had lost the thread of comfort that had been mine. In the heavy stillness my ear drums seemed to crack, and quite plainly I heard the tick of my watch, marking the musical ring of it. The slight rustling noise that Kitteridge made as he stretched himself on the ground as if to sleep, made my heart leap and brought the sweat to my forehead. For me, every leaf was a pointing finger and in the vine-tangled darkness was a pageant of unseen terrors. After a long time, out of the hot silence, came the voice of Kitteridge. "If we are still, the chances are that we'll see the morning."

No other word was spoken, but through the sluggish night, ours were lidless eyes intent upon the blackness.

Of course, when the world rolled into the light again and the leafy caves were shot with gold, much of our uneasiness vanished. But the gloom of the night still weighed upon us and the jungle depths suggested uncertain things in hiding, so that we kept close together. The mind of each of us had been weakened by the strain undergone and while there was some attempt at jocularly, the fearful glances

that were shot from right to left told a tale.

Happily, three hours' walk the next morning took us out of the tangle of vegetation and to the border of a valley on the farther side of which was a hill, half hidden with a light haze. To the north, the valley seemed to lose itself in a swamp land fringed about with tall reeds, but it was a silent land and there were no signs of life in the sky nor on the earth. Kitteridge refused to cross the open valley, although it was, apparently, the most direct way to the hill which was our goal. According to the chart, the lost city of Cebola was perched on the farther side of the hill and the valley before us was the Cañada de l'Araña, the place of horrors of the story. So we detoured and gained the edge of the marsh land. Here caution was necessary, for when Murray stepped into the water, his feet sank fast in the ooze. Under the thin skin of water was a very tenacious kind of mud. So that morning we went in single file, shrinking at the blue unwholesome water and avoiding the yellow dry land of the valley, and so we came, a little after noon, to the foot of the ridge.

Climbing that, it did not escape my notice that every stone of considerable size seemed to be anchored to the ground with a yellowish web, and now and then we saw a spider, a little bright, black thing, but it was evidently harmless and, being surprised, feigned death. Then it was that Fowler laughed loud at what he called Kitteridge's childish tale, and our fears decreased. The spiders were not as startling to us as the large yellow beetles which, when disturbed, gave forth a sickening and offensive odor, scurrying away to hide, but towards us, strangely enough, and burying themselves swiftly in the loose

ground at our very feet. After a while, even these did not interest us.

The ridge gained, we halted in wonderment. Below us, running at right angles to our course, was a narrow strip of brush land, and beyond that we saw against the pale blue of the sky, the top of a building, a fantastic tower of brilliant white, about which hung a thick vegetation. Seen thus, it was like the work of some crazy artist, a delirious fantasy in red and purple and bright yellow, with great splashes of light green—a picture at once fascinating and terrible. Like a vast living creature overcome, the squat tower stared at us with cavernous eyes. It was a giant enmeshed in the tyrant jungle.

Not long did we thus stand. The breeze that came over the shoulder of the hill was like wine to us. Shouting and laughing in high good humor, we dashed into the strip of green tangle, and the symphony of life was glorious. The screaming din of a thousand parrots disturbed in their noonday rest, the noise of a myriad insects, and the strange rustlings in the trees overhead as the torn vines pulled at the upper branches, these excited us. Then we were on the hill side, racing like madmen. Into the thick vegetation about the portal we dived to pass into a green twilight of arches and pillars, into a sudden stillness.

So old was that building, that tall trees were in the courtyard whose boughs met high overhead, forming a mighty arch through which pierced golden arrows of sunlight to make a strange arabesque on the pavement. At the end of this avenue sat a mighty thing of stone, and there was a dignity and a majesty about it that halted us. Powerful and terrible

it was to see, a seated figure, slightly leaning forward, the elbow resting on the draped knee, the chin in the cupped hand of it. In the eyes there was grave mockery. For a moment, not one of us but was a prey to terror, to stupefaction. In vain I tried to shake off the numbness that was upon me, but a blackness came and went so that the grotesque figures in bas-relief behind the great thing of stone, staggered and reeled, and try as I would, from the heart withering horror I could not turn.

It was an immense relief when Fowler walked down the hall, his steel shod heels clattering noisily, and, passing to the end of the avenue, impudently sat himself on the pedestal at the foot of the god. I saw his face, on which brutality and debauchery were written, and with a sense of comfort it was good to turn from the calm dignity above, to the living creature with muddy skin and dissipated eyes, too stupid to be fear-haunted.

"I can't do nothing with that ugly beast lookin' on," said he. "Believe me, it ain't to my taste."

So saying, he sprang to his feet, and stripping off his linen jacket, leaped to pedestal, to knee, to shoulder of the god and shrouded its face with his coat, making all fast with his belt very deftly. Somehow, that made all the difference.

Then to work we went. Even Kitteridge joined in. About and about the courtyard we ran like wilful boys, disturbing the dust of the centuries, overturning stones, wrestling with fallen pillars, climbing, peering, digging, burrowing in a ruck of rubbish. The thought of it brings back a string of pictures to my mind: Fowler smashing a hollow stone to pieces with a rounded rock; Murray on hands and

knees, scraping a pile of loose stuff away from a little opening; Kitteridge and I rapping and sounding the great stone figure and overturning the flat rock at its base. Once when Murray found a niche in the wall that looked like a doorway, we were crazily eager. But very soon it became evident that what we sought was not there, for of sign of treasure there was naught. It was not until Fowler gave up, for he clung to the search the longest, that we would admit that the whole scheme was visionary and wild, and that for our wages, we had but experience. So, the day being far advanced, we made for the open with the idea of camping on the rocky hill for the night.

The fire being lighted and the water set to boil, Fowler bethought him of his jacket, remembering the night's chill on the heights. "Don't want to leave mister god smothered," said he and started up the hill singing some sailor chantie in raucous voice, his arms swinging loosely and his body swaying. The gray of evening leaped upon us before he reached the temple gate, but we heard his voice, booming hollow in the stone court.

"A rovin', a rovin'
Since rovin's been my ruin
I'll go no more a rovin'."

Then the singing stopped. A moment later the pulsing silence was stabbed by a strange, prolonged shriek. It was a note that shot upward as a siren does, then it suddenly ceased to recommence at the highest pitch. Murray stopped his ears with the pain of it and Kitteridge started to his feet, and his grip tightened on my arm with painful intensity.

Through the gloom we saw Fowler, his jacket in his hand, and he was flapping it strangely and violently. The way was clear to our camp, but he swerved from his course, breaking into a patch of brush, screaming the while. Out he came again, running zig-zag, sometimes staggering, sometimes moving in little circles, again making little dashes into bushes, but always flapping at himself with his linen jacket. His actions were spasmodic, grotesquely jerky, as if fighting some invisible thing. But to us he did not come. As one blind he moved, circling about us like a frightened dog.

"My God," said Kitteridge, and gave me a push as he started to run to Fowler, but it was clear that the tortured man wished to avoid him, for he made pushing signs with his hands. Then Kitteridge made a dead stop. Seeing that, Fowler stopped too, though he still acted strangely, lifting his feet continually, flapping his elbows, brushing his face.

"Stay away. Stay away," he shouted hoarsely, and then came a heart chilling moan. Slowly he came towards us until he was twenty paces, ten paces off. And then we saw. Instead of a face there was a mask, a brown scum that moved. Spiders, little spiders covered him. They came from underneath his clothing and ran over his face to lose themselves in his hair and they crept into his shirt until the material bulged and bagged with the living mass. They swarmed from him, running down his legs to scurry about his feet and rush at him again, and they fell from his finger tips and elbows like rotting fruit. Even as we looked, there began to appear a silvery film about the man.

Kitteridge brushed past me, almost knocking me

down. "Don't come," he panted, and went running. I made a half-hearted move to follow him, but my will was flaccid. And night was coming swiftly.

Fowler had fallen as soon as Kitteridge reached him, and the other seemed to be working frantically—stamping, rubbing, brushing. The white mist of early night swept up the slope, so that the two men became unsubstantial, wraithlike. Then the horizon was blotted out and the temple became a gray shapeless shadow, and a doubt of the reality of the whole sickening business possessed me.

Later, from the hill top came a voice, and it was the voice of Kitteridge, strong and almost triumphant.

"Better leave us, fellows. You can do nothing. Poor old Fowler!"

There was a long pause. Then from the gloom of the temple came a "Good night!" and that was all.

Murray shook his fists above his head, then dropped his hands by his sides. We spoke no word, picked up none of our belongings, but turned and went down the hill. We did not even look back before we passed into the gloom of the forest.

The Phonograph

GEORDIE the Bum commenced to spread his gospel as soon as he entered the door and talked as he crossed to the bar.

"I seen a man," he commenced, and then went into descriptions, and testified to his own interest in the business welfare of the house.

The bartender eyed Geordie dispassionately but showed enough interest to suspend his glass-cleaning operations. He glanced through the open door, taking in the mole, the sea front and the anchored steamer, then set a glass on the counter, for it was an unwritten law of the land that whoso bore good tidings should have his drink full and free.

"Rum," said the beach comber. He filled a glass, emptied it at a gulp, refused the offered water and, as the barman started to put away the bottle, "Don't be short with it. Gimme an extra tot."

"Look like he's got anything?" asked the other, as he complied with Geordie's request.

"Had a big box. Took two Chilaneans to carry it: Looks like he wanted it to be took good care of. . . . He's got a wooden leg, too. A Yank."

Few left the steamer at Chica. Such as did were mostly contract men, shepherds, who, coming direct from the highlands of Scotland, were met by the *estancieros* and hurried off to camp without delay. A runaway sailor hit the place now and then, or a mysterious beach comber, a modern Ishmael, who

came from no one knew or cared where. Passengers on such steamers as anchored, after giving one look at the ragged, treeless streets straggling down the hill, decided to stay on board during the coaling.

The Plaza Hotel was a one-storied shack covered with corrugated iron painted a bright red. It seemed to have wandered from the more sober-colored houses and ventured, as far as it dared, seaward. The wind had drifted the sand towards it and piled it, until it formed a little bank that buried the wooden steps, making a steep slope leading to the gallery that ran the length of the house. Along the top of this gallery ran a large signboard on which was painted in lean letters the name "International Hotel." Along the other side of the house the name "Hotel Plaza" appeared.

The bartender and Geordie met the one-legged man and his escort at the door, and relieved him of his slight baggage. He, in turn, directed the two Chileans to set the box within, giving his instructions as loudly as though they were deaf. There was a little preliminary talk and permission was obtained for the use of the barroom, payment to be made when a suitable rate was arranged that should be mutually satisfactory and based on the patronage obtained.

The showman was a silent man and set up his contraption in the center of the floor with the air of one whose goods would speak for themselves. Geordie hovered about him, an inefficient man endeavoring to appear as one who helped. Onlookers seemed little interested. Men came in, tan-faced and bearded, took their drink and lounged around smoking. Some soon left, but others stayed, sitting on the bar or squatting on their heels. The talk was of sheep and

horses, dogs and cattle. For the most part they were dressed in *pasea* clothes of rough, ill-fitting tweeds, with woolen shirts. One or two recently arrived from camp had on leather coats and jack boots, but all wore spurs, great roweled things that clanked with every move. A few shepherd dogs found secluded places in corners and under chairs, and watched their masters intently.

About the room hung, displayed for sale, things of the camp. There were saddles, bits and bridles, horse rugs, whips and a lasso or two. On the shelves, above those devoted to bottles, were buanaco capas, boots, ponchos and piles of thick, gray wool stockings. One little space held statuettes of the Virgin and gaudy-colored religious pictures with other similar things. Beneath this was a great pile of French tobacco in bright blue paper packages.

The vice-consul came in as the man completed the setting up of his machine. He was a red-faced, round-bellied man, and though it was but ten in the morning, he had the far-away look that betokens a mellowness that would increase until noon and happily pass away in the siesta time. He called for an ajenco, and sipping it, talked with the bartender.

"Phonograph," he said laconically. "Heard about 'em. Great things. Government report."

"Fake?" asked the other.

"Not exactly. Edison's an American and show me a Yank what's not a genius. He's invented all sorts of things. No trouble to him. Dreams them. He's a kind of spiritualist, I believe. Sleeps on a hard board."

Jake Hughes, the bartender, listened attentively

and stored up the information for further use, for to impart odds and ends of knowledge was one of his trade assets.

To the onlookers the apparatus was both mysterious and interesting in its appearance when set up. The machinery was enclosed in a large glass box, from the upper rim of which depended a half dozen rubber tubes, each of which was bifurcated and ended in black rubber tips, intended to place in the ears of the listener.

The wooden-legged man, having satisfied himself that all was in working order, took a seat at the further end of his instrument and waited patiently, as the story teller of old, seated in the market place on his carpet, must have done.

Sam Cameron, of Ote-ten-Aike, drew near. He looked into the tips of the tubes, handled them gingerly, then peered through the glass top.

"How's it worked?" he asked. "Is there a crank?"

The showman explained in a dull monotone.

"Set it going, then," said Sam as he adjusted the ear tips. He watched the whirring cylinder, then said, "But there ain't nothing but a noise. A buzzin'."

"Wait a little," advised the showman.

Then those at the bar that were watching saw a smile spread over Sam's face and heard him make a dire prophecy concerning his soul's future in a joyous tone. A second or two later the smile broadened into a grin and he was moved to declare his canine ancestry.

"Watcher hearin'?" asked Geordie, leaning over him.

"Keep still," was the reply, as Sam gave a backward kick. At that some of the others crowded near and Sam stood up and let the tubes drop.

"What's the charge?" he asked.

"Three toons a dollar," said the showman.

"No; that don't go," said Sam. "This here's something you don't hear every day. You ought to take it to the Malvinoes. Anyway, a dollar a tune's the price for me." So saying, he handed over a bill and thus simply was the tariff made, established and afterwards recognized. At this other bills were laid on the bar and the men made their own change from the pile. By virtue of his position as pioneer hearer, Sam gave the word as soon as the new set of hearers had the tips adjusted and the machine was put in operation again. Then others crowded in, boatmen, fishermen, loafers, nearby storekeepers, and the showman was kept busy. There were arguments and bets were freely made as to which tune was the best, and the dozen records were played over and over again. A march by the United States Marine Band was finally declared the favorite. The Ravings of John McCullough ran it a close second.

"The day's rent for this here room'll be twenty dollars," said the bartender as he advanced with outstretched hand.

The man promptly stripped off the required amount from his rapidly increasing roll. "I'm game when trade's like this here is," said he.

"And," added Jake, "for the good of the house, you'll set 'em up every now and then."

"Whatever's the custom of the country," cheerfully agreed the other. "When I'm in Rome I do like the Roman's done," he added.

There was an intermezzo of drinks and an assortment of tastes manifested that astonished the man from Boston, Mass. Pisco, bitters, whiskey, rum, brandy, ajenco, vermuth, anisado, ouatcheki, cana, beer, gin, wines red, white, fino and native, were called for and taken straight. Portions were generous, for each man helped himself, the various bottles being set on the counter with glasses by Jake as the names were called.

"The talley's two tots each," called the bartender. "You take 'em or leave 'em. The showman pays."

Delange came in. He had heard of the machine through the vice-consul. Handsome, debonnaire, well-dressed in white trousers and red silk sash was he. Popular report had it that he was a descendant from Spanish royalty, with a bar sinister. He knew, and was a little proud of, his fictitious history. Indeed, he very materially helped to keep the story alive by fostering a chin tuft and moustache trimmed in the style of a stage Don. Having heard a couple of records, he mounted his horse at the palenque and clattered up town to find his Rosita, the silver trappings on his horse-gear jingling merrily. When he returned, shortly afterward, she was with him. She had the modest demeanor of a Chilean girl and stood at the door, a graceful figure, hand-in-hand with her lover until the record then playing was done.

At a sign from Delange she took a place at the machine. The others, Europeans, Falkland Islanders and Americans alike, having long since assimilated the politeness to women characteristic of the people of Valdivia, stood aside. As soon as the first sounds were heard the girl took the tubes from her ears and crossed herself reverently. Nor could Delange per-

suade her to listen again. There was a whispered conversation at the end of which Delange threw a ten-dollar bill on the top of the case and invited all to hear at his expense. He then conducted Rosita to one of the many rickety chairs near the door, placing it so that she could survey the sea front, and again mounted his horse.

"This here business and town's the best I ever hit," observed the showman.

"The average is what tells," said Jake enigmatically.

"Say, what did the girl renege for, though?"

"You'll see soon, sonny," was the reply.

It was not long before Delange reappeared, and with him was the Padre, mounted on a stout ass. He was a portly, red-faced man, brown-frocked and girded, who might have stepped from the ranks of the Canterbury Pilgrims. Delange aided him to dismount, and, sombrero in hand, bowed him into the room. He advanced a couple of paces and paused to take in the scene with deliberation. Then, with raised hand, he pronounced a blessing, after which he walked to the phonograph and inspected it with care. He took a pinch of snuff, then flourished a red handkerchief and blew his nose noisily. The bartender approached, bearing a glass of white wine, which he offered silently. The Father took it and drank it, seemingly absent-mindedly. After a word or two with Delange, he found a seat, adjusted the tubes and prepared himself to listen. The record chanced to be the *Stabat Mater* of Rossini. The good man seemed well pleased and, at its conclusion, said:

"It is, without doubt, a thing purely mechanical and of evil in it I see nothing. There are, it is true,

better ways in which one's time may be passed, but there are also worse."

He took a seat by a window then and watched the others solemnly.

Delange led Rosita forward and the bartender placed a chair for her, wiping the seat with his shirt sleeve. She motioned an invitation to the men grouped at the bar to listen with her, and Delange seconded it with a wave of his hand and passed some bills to the showman. The record being finished, she heard another gravely, then arose, adjusted her mantilla and, placing her hand on Delange's arm, left the room after a word in passing to the Padre.

Ten minutes later a bullock cart drew up before the door of the saloon. Rosita sat within and also her father and mother, grandfather and grandmother, with two or three other old people. Delange also rode up and, after tying his horse to the palenque, assisted the old folks into the room, where they disposed themselves in a rough circle about the machine. It took some diplomacy on the part of Rosita to get them all seated, for there were precedents to observe—precedents due to age and rank and sex. One wrinkled, withered crone, finding herself placed without proper reference to her rank, sat primly upright, staring straight seaward as though she saw visions. She made no spoken complaint but obtusely disregarded all invitations to listen until Rosita had discovered and rectified the error.

At the moment when the record was about to commence, the oldest man in the party, Jesus Cartola, halted the showman and hobbled around to his wife, seated opposite, to inquire in courtly manner whether her chair was comfortably placed. Then, in

his quavering voice, he bade them all move closer, ordering Rosita and Delange to see to the seats. The noise of the moving of chairs having ceased, the old man gave a final glance around and, being satisfied that all was well, signaled the Boston man to proceed. He listened with quiet attention until his ear caught the meaning of the strange sounds, then stood up, and, holding the tube in his left hand, raised his right to bespeak attention. The other listeners meanwhile tried to give him the respectful audience due to his years and rank and yet continued to listen to the record. Then he began:

"Such music as this I heard once in La Banda Oriental. Years ago it was when men were happy and young, and after the concert we sang, all of us, on the Plaza. Well do I remember. Bravely dressed were the bandmen."

With many nods he readjusted the tips to drop them a moment later.

"Hear me," he cried excitedly. "The drums are there and also the campanella. The golden trumpet, too, I hear. Most marvelous is it that these old ears should again drink in the like . . . That day we danced the Cuaca; a dance truly graceful. Thus it goes. But few men know it now."

He left the machine and stiffly went through some evolutions on the floor, explaining as he moved:

"The señorita advanced thus and the gallant so . . . One bows thus as he moves," and he illustrated with ancient grace, fluttering meanwhile a rag of a handkerchief.

While the record was playing the Padre drew near. He stood and watched the whirring machine a while,

which seemed to interest him vastly more than the music; then said a word in Spanish to Patrick Glennon.

As the old people, marshaled by Cartola, left the machine and took seats arranged along the wall, Glennon edged up to the showman and whispered from behind his hand:

"Ye'll remimber it's nayther right nor proper that the Church should pay. 'Tis not the custom at all, at all."

"What's the custom is what I do," was the reply.

"And the Father ses, ses he, that this is a thing that 'tis well the childer should hear. The scholars, he ses, an' it, please God, may come to hear in siesta time."

"Good," said the Boston man.

"Of course," added Glennon, "that, too, is on the Church, so to spake. Never a charge there'll be."

So it came to pass that a barefooted, bronzed boy was sent forth with a message, and shortly after the little ones trooped in. There were many of them, well-dressed and otherwise. There were boys and girls of all ages and some so young that they were borne on their mothers' backs, and they ranged themselves silently on the side of the room in which the Padre stood. If a line had been drawn down the floor and through the phonograph, not a child would have been found on the side nearest the bar. The Padre took a seat near the window and fell to reading his breviary, while Glennon, with evident delight, arranged the children in order to take their turn in listening. They were all very grave and well-mannered, with dark lustrous eyes that wonderingly

watched every movement. Having heard, each passed out of the door, the boys bowing and the girls courtesying to the reading Padre.

Not until the last child had gone did the Father leave. Rosita had her work to do in persuading the old people to go, nor until she pointed out the priest's absence would they consent to move. Finally they filed out with many backward looks and were assisted into the bullock cart by some of the gringos, and as the vehicle lumbered away swaying heavily in the gutted, rutted road, old Cartola was seen standing in the midst of his little party steadying himself, with one hand gripping a stake while he gesticulated with the other, and his quavering voice was heard telling of the glories of the past until it was drowned by distance and the shrieking of the wooden wheels. The showman, attracted by the sight so new to him, murmured to the bartender, "It reminds me of Mary Anternette in that there tumbril going to the gillertine. Funny ways Dagoes have."

Now standing in front of the cuartel was Francisco Rufino. He was gray as to moustache and short, but with a certain presence that well fitted him for his military position. Seeing the trooping children and the bullock cart, he scented an affair of mysterious interest. He knew that there was no fiesta, so was all the keener to learn what was afoot. From the passing girls, he gathered somewhat but utterly failed to piece their remarks together into anything reasonable. It seemed, as far as he could judge, that at the boliche-gringo on the beach, was music of some sort. That much seemed clear but yet was contradicted by another remark which fell from the

lips of a passing girl to the effect that "there was still no instrument." And another had spoken of the wonder of a "voice without a body." At that he had been tempted to ask questions but was prevented by the appearance of another group. In this was one who wondered whether "he of the leg of wood, doubtless a valiant soldier in the land of the gringos" had, or had not something in the nature of an accordion hidden somewhere. "That might well be," said a tall handsome girl, "for beneath the house players could be hidden and the sounds could pass up through the little pipes." Another agreed that the suggestion was a possible solution, "for it is but sand and easy to dig."

As the bullock cart paused to make the turn of the corner, a something that required much filling and backing, the eye of El Capitan Francisco Rufino chanced to light on Jesus Cartola in the midst of his crones exhorting as it seemed, and he knew from the air of suppressed excitement that the party had also seen the mysterious something. So he stepped to the bullock cart and halted the *carretero*.

On seeing the officer, Cartola immediately transferred his attention from the women to the soldier.

"Hear me," he began. "Of the many wonderful things that it has pleased God the Father that my old ears should hear, this is of all the most wonderful. In the days of Rosas, in Buenos Ayres heard I military music and also in La Banda Oriental. In Santiago again was a band most wonderful to see, and he that beat the drum was a man among men. Zang. So went the cymbals of brass. Good it was as the band at a bull fight. Then, too, the trumpets, the swords and the flags. Now, Capitan, is all this again

brought to me in a box of glass. The same thing."

"It is nothing new," said the Captain loftily. "We that have traveled and seen war already know of such things. A music box it is of the Swiss, a gringo people. Well do I know. From a cylinder of brass comes the music and therein are points of steel like unto the chin of an unshaved man."

"Not so Capitan," protested Cartola. "These old women will testify with me. There are tubes of rubber and in them is the music. It is a brave music and not thin like that of the Swiss box. Valiant men play. One sees them. There is the clash of swords. It is as it was in days long past when I was young and a devil with the women. A well-flavored youth was I. . . . I knew nothing of this until a short while since. Thus, stood I in the house taking a *maté*, when Rosita the small came and said to me, Tio . . ."

The old man recommenced the tale that he had told over and over again to the women about him, beginning at the point when Rosita first told him of the wonder, but the impatient officer signaled to the *carretero* who immediately urged his oxen forward and the clumsy vehicle went on its way while the old man continued his story undeterred by the interruption.

Rufino marched down the street taking the center of the road. On the way he stopped at Juan Pablo's by invitation, to test a newly received barrel of black beer, and, a little further on, with strict impartiality, at José Garcia's, where he sampled a new brand of French cognac. Business was at a lull when he reached the Plaza Hotel, but, after a glance at the phonograph to assure himself that it was not, as he suspected, a Swiss music box, he deigned to

accept a glass of red wine. That finished, the attentive Jake promptly set a second before him. When that was emptied, he placed a restrictive finger across the top of the glass saying, with an air of strict self-denial: "A small drinker I permit myself to be."

Then, as if he had noticed it for the first time, he pointed with his sheathed sword to the phonograph, saying jocosely, "What new thing have we here?"

After explanations, he took a seat, with fine condescension, and, with a wave of his glove, signified his pleasure that the entertainment should begin. The bartender whispered to Glennon that he should warn the showman that the custom of the country implied a tender of hospitality to the military.

Rufino heard the record with a judicial air and, presently catching the rhythm of the military march, solemnly beat time. Then he walked to the bar and leaned there meditatively. The bartender very unobtrusively filled another glass and set it at the military elbow. As one lost to mundane things the Captain drank and the glass was immediately replenished.

"You're sure keen on hospitality in this here neck of the woods," said the showman, a little ruefully, to Glennon.

"Me parece—" began the Captain and then paused. He frowned at the wine glass and then observed casually, "A little whiskey serves to settle the stomach."

It was said en passant, as it were, and with an air of detachment as one who imparted general information, say concerning the length of the diameter of the earth. But Jake Hughes understood and set a

bottle of Kinahan's Three-Star on the counter together with a small glass.

"I wish," said he with the air of asking a favor, "you would give me an opinion on the quality of this, Capitan."

The Captain filled a glass and drank it at a gulp.

"It is of a good body, I believe," he reported. Then, perhaps to assure himself of the correctness of his judgment, he took another. "I was not mistaken," he said.

After awhile he said reflectively, referring to the phonograph, "It appears to me that such an instrument is of value. The man has done well to bring it to us. Shortly, I shall so arrange that he is heard at the Government House. Tomorrow it may be, if God wills. What the impost may be will be settled later when the Secretary hears. Meanwhile we must give him patronage. The soldiers shall hear it. It is well so. It will raise their spirits, for their pay has not come and is much past due. Further, is it not well that those that offer their blood should have pleasure?"

"Your words are true," agreed Jake.

"Free list, of course," whispered Glennon.

"Gawd!" grumbled the showman. "If the army doesn't take down the average to below freezing point I'm lucky. The Church hit me a solar plexus blow already."

"No way out of it," said Glennon. "You ought to bow and tell the Captain he's welcome."

"Darned if I'll bow and pass his deadheads, too," was the reply.

"Que dice?" asked the Captain of Glennon. "What does he say?"

"He says," answered the Irishman as if interpreting, "that what he has is at your service. He offers you all he has free. He welcomes you and your valiant soldiers and your friends and your relations. He says that your patriotic spirit fills him with joy. He says he is full of gratitude at your patronage. He says that the men of the gunboat are also welcome and begs you to induce the Commandante and his friends to patronize him."

"That is good," said the Captain. "But the language of the gringo says much in few words, it appears to me."

Now it took full four hours to satisfy the needs of the soldiery and far more than that to satisfy the first relay of their friends, so that the sea sands were silvered by the moon and the Magellanic clouds powdered the velvet sky before the barroom was cleared. Even then there were knockings at door and window.

That night the showman counted his gains with the bartender to help, after the bill for drinks that were marked against him was settled. There was some speculation as to the probable amount of the "impost" that the Captain had spoken of.

"This place," said the Boston man, "is all right on the original tariff as published, but it's the low average that hurts. Patronage's too popular. The non-revenue traffic's too dense for comfort."

"Tomorrow there's the poor," said Jake.

"All deadheads?"

"You might call 'em that between friends, but it's safer to say 'hospitality.' Then there's the family and connection of Valencia. He's rich and don't pay. Got a pull. Then there is the prisoners—they

go free. And fiesta days everything free, like that thing of yours, by order. And there's them hospitalities of the Government House what you're to get. You'll have to set up a little supper. You're a guest then, kind of back-action one. Then there's—"

"Wait a bit," said the showman. "I'm too much overcome with all this here hospitality. Say, when's the next steamer north?"

Learning The Game

ONE day when I was in the Andes country, it suddenly occurred to me that while I had had a thundering good time wandering about at my own will, there was an economic machine, and the sooner I decided to find my place in it the better. The idea persisting, I sold my horses in Gallegos, took passage on a convict ship bound for Buenos Ayres, and in time landed in New York. At first, because of a large and free-handed hospitality on the part of nature and man south of the Rio Negro, New York took on a character of veiled sycophancy, and the fact that I had gold-dust and rubies and a few rough diamonds seemed to create a jerky stimulus in people, not only among hotel servants, but among some of my own relatives. My traveling companion, Bill Bond, was more uncomfortable than I, he never having known a city, having been born in the Falkland Islands, and when we bought a steamer ticket to England, he could not conform to his surroundings but walked down the gangway and sought a schooner on which he shipped as deck hand. But we met in Southampton, went to Paris, and in time Europe eased us of our savings so that we knew deference no more.

Being again in the United States we both discovered a restless wandering tendency in ourselves. For a time I was worried and wondered whether loose living in South America had atrophied some-

thing or other in me. Nor in the fierce activity of the city could I find any place. For a while I meditated on becoming a mounted policeman, and once both Bill and I were within an ace of joining Buffalo Bill's show in the character of Argentine gauchos, for we were handy with the boleadores and easily at home in the saddle. But at last we went to Canada where our temperaments sent us off on different paths, Bill becoming a hobo, while I joined a party bound for the James Bay territory. After that I had months of footing and canoeing about Lake Nipigon, then a sailing trip to Isle Royal, then a week or so on a fishing boat which ended at Duluth, where I took train for West Texas and at last brought up in the Devil's River country.

For a time I was partially contented, but only partially. I wanted to be a part of the machine and Texas was no nearer to my desire than Patagonia. And the strange taciturnity of the cowboys worried me. They possessed admirable patience and endurance, but their periods of lightheartedness were too evanescent and they seemed to lack the vivid imagination of the men south of the Rio Negro, who made a frank and pleasant business of life. The cowboy struck me as lacking laughter and lightness and humor. He had been tainted, as it were, by the pious twaddle of itinerant preachers, for Boanerges had invaded the plains.

Sometimes I feared that I had fallen into a mood that should be strenuously resisted and that lurking cynicism was growing within me. I seemed to be seeking some chimerical thing not to be defined, and thought that I would have to get back to the Andes lands. Then it came to me that my years of free-

dom had resulted in a loss of discipline and if so, the sooner I imposed chains upon myself, the better.

It was in a railroad town in New Mexico where I became a cog in the machine. I reached there on horseback after a six weeks ride via the Jarilla mountains, where I prospected a while for gold. The quest failing, I sat down to take stock, and to decide which of all the human activities most appealed to me, and the transportation field won. So in the town I had struck, my first attack was upon the railroad official most approachable, which chanced to be the shop foreman. I had visions of running a locomotive.

My intention was to state my case compactly in an endeavor to find the niche I was best able to fill, but that idea was abandoned as soon as I set eyes on my man. He was one of those chinless fellows with narrow, sloping shoulders and a little obstinate head, obviously of the kind to be at once bully and toady, and when I presented myself he eyed me silently, tearing at a plug of tobacco with yellow teeth the while. He put me in mind of a hyena.

Before I had a chance to say anything, a thick-lipped and blundering fellow all full of vitality and earnestness came, and in his hand he carried a flue-expander with which he gesticulated. From the smell and appearance of him I gathered that he was a boiler maker and it was abundantly clear that he was full of anger. His chin was thrust out and his brow was corrugated, and he had something of the aspect of a bull-gorilla. At once the foreman became conciliatory in his manner; conciliatory and sympathetic as the boiler maker spluttered and thundered and vituperated, threatening terrible things

and promising to eviscerate some unknown. There were expletives, and luridities, and canicular references and his complaint, cleared of trimmings and superlatives, was that he had been given a helper whose chief qualifications were weariness and drowsiness.

On the spur of the moment I broke in and proclaimed myself as one who possessed all the qualifications of a boiler maker's helper, at which the foreman drew a sigh of relief, got on his high horse and affected a masterful manner. "We'll give you a trial," he said in a high-pitched voice, and nodded and winked. Then, with a masterly flourish of his hand he made to dismiss me with a "Get to hell out a here and over to engine 503."

The brainless and under-bred little fellow was as easy to see through as glass, an abuser of petty power and a cunning trickster who would attempt to impose upon anyone, and yet an arrant coward. He reminded me of a snarling puma that would threaten and growl and show tooth and claw, but would turn tail at a whack on the nose.

Said I at a venture, reckless too because I had no great mind to go further with the experiment: "Pay ought to begin on Monday morning though. I'll want that."

"Hell! Whatja mean? Two free days?" he shouted, his eyes narrowing but darting sidelong at the boiler maker. "Want to rob the company? Eh?"

"A husky guy's worth that," put in the boiler maker, then added, with quite unwarranted assurance, "He's Union. Anyone can see that." Then to me, "That's the talk, bo. Stick to it."

And that ended matters, for the foreman conceded my outrageous demand and I went out into the shop following my boiler maker, where we wriggled into the man-hole of a locomotive firebox and disposed ourselves to smoke. After a little friendly talk, not on the business at hand but on general matters, such as two stranger horsemen might hold when meeting on the pampas, my man rigged up a brace very cleverly, set his ratchet drill, then told me to work out the broken staybolt, warning me that I was not to try to break any records. "There ain't going to be no scabbin' round these works," he said. "The bosses gets all they can out of us and we gets all we can out of them." Then he wriggled out of the man-hole and spoke again, his face framed in the oval steel. "It ought to be worth a dollar, gettin' you this job," he said. So I paid my footing and went to work, nor did he return until nearly half an hour had passed, with a strong suggestion of beer about him.

We were two days in the firebox of engine 503 and the time passed pleasantly enough. Other boiler makers visited us, sat and smoked and talked, and when members of the craft were very sociably disposed, some passing helper was sent to bring beer. If the shop foreman chanced to look in on such occasions, which he did sometimes by way of displaying energy when the master mechanic hove in sight, he affected not to see the visitors, being careful to avoid meddling with sound union principles.

Altogether I was boiler maker's helper for two weeks, much impressed with the foolish wastefulness of time on the part of the workmen, equally impressed with the complicated two-faced sycophancy of the foreman and back shop boss who seemed to

keep their jobs by exercise of a curious alertness and wonderful ingenuity, with a silly mildness towards and a humoring of the men on one hand, and a hoodwinking of under officials who seemed quite willing to be hoodwinked, on the other. And always the threat of a strike was enough to make the foreman capitulate, not because of the loss of industry, but because of rueful consequences to himself.

My boiler shop experience came to an end because calamity befell the foreman of the paint shop. The trouble had its origin in some church schism by which the paint shop foreman found himself opposed to one of his men. Excitement ran high and there were ramifications and counter charges that had a flavor of gallantry about them, and at last the foreman was denounced as a thief to the head storekeeper, whereupon the accused man talked about his outraged feelings and resigned. Then there were investigations, with the company detective very active and mysterious, whispering with men in corners and walking about with his hat pulled over eyes, and at last the foreman with the sensitive conscience found his house searched. And most wonderful things came to light, so strange and wonderful that bookkeepers in the maintenance of equipment department had to revise their charges for the cost of coach painting. For upstairs and downstairs things were found—forty kegs of white lead, paint brushes by the gross, oils and varnishes, chamois leather in bundles, diamonds for glass cutting, a large caboose stove, a locomotive headlight, odds and ends innumerable. Under the noses of detectives and officials and clerks and storekeeper the man had taken things in the spirit of a mediæval

robber knight. And in court he talked frankly and unaffectedly about the ease with which not only he but his superiors had helped themselves. Indeed, he talked with such thorough knowledge and added so much promising information to his answers, tricking out the original theme with appoggiaturas and grace notes, that counsel for the defense smiled as one that would weather the storm and pilot his client's ship to a safe haven. Nor was he wrong.

Next day I saw this. Just before the noon hour, a man in the machine shop made a requisition for a monkey wrench, and having received it took it up the street to a secondhand dealer and sold it for half a dollar. With that he bought beer for himself and friends. Now I by no means assert that I have any special aptitude for neutralizing opportunities for dishonest dealing, but seeing that impudent piece of work and the silly manner in which a corporation all fortified with accountants and cost system, officials and detectives, allowed itself to be robbed, I did some thinking with a result that I framed a system of requisitions that would surely and efficiently check that wholesale plundering. With that in proper shape for discussion I went to the storekeeper's chief clerk. He regarded the outline plan with a lack-luster eye, then told me that he was paid to do that kind of thing and butting-in was highly distasteful to him. That very effectually ended attempts in one direction. So I tried the office of the general superintendent. There I ran against another scornful chief-clerk who bade me leave my papers to the end that the usual course might be followed, and when I refused to do that and demanded an interview with his chief, he seemed

to put all kinds of mischievous interpretations upon my insistence.

But I was full of my plan, and, in a mood of reckless desperation I did the unheard of thing of outflanking the enemy and marching on the door marked

PRIVATE—GEN'L SUPT.

As the chief clerk was making a flustered effort to stop me I flung the door open to discover the potentate reading the Saturday Evening Post. Immediately he flung the magazine aside as one who had chanced to pick up something inadvertently, and fussed with the papers in his file basket. And at the same moment, by a happy inspiration, to gain time on the pursuing chief clerk, I threw out the name of a certain man all powerful in the railroad world leaving to be inferred what would. It was a kind of protective coloration on my part. Immediately I had prestige and plunged forthwith into my subject. At first the general superintendent was lofty then patiently tolerant as though I were taking the time and attention of one absorbed in weighty problems, but when he caught the drift of the thing he was interested. So interested that when the chief clerk came in, on an improvised errand to protect his lord, rather high and hectoring as he spoke across me, the superintendent told him that he was busy and wished to be undisturbed. The chief clerk shot a glance in my direction, and there were dark lightnings in his eyes.

Now as I afterwards discovered, the general superintendent had no love for the general storekeeper

There were internal politics at work and I came like Cortez, a promising ally. But I did not know that. What I did know and see was that my man had a certain kind of brilliancy about him, a kind of frontage, and it was obvious very soon that he was capable of a measure of finesse. He was one of those so often found in minor offices, men lacking originality but quick to seize upon the ideas of others and, slightly transforming them, give them the stamp of their own individuality. So he pondered over my plans a while, his horse-like face very serious, then hinted that he found merit in them. But still he was suspicious. "Why wouldn't our auditors have gotten out these forms if they're any good?" he asked, inconsequently. I pointed out that special skill was apt to run to routine. "Gad! It's so. Gad it is," he said, and chuckled. Then came what he called suggestions. Trifles that meant nothing. A line for the signatures should be here instead of there. He went on to other things, the size of the paper and the color, the width of the margin. It was a triumph of impudence, but it was tantamount to an adoption of my plan, or an absorption of it under the pretense of dispassionate judgment and careful criticism, and in the end he called in the chief clerk, announced that he had decided to put me in the storehouse and that I was a specialist who would install a new system to supersede the irregular method then in existence. It was very clear that he was proud of his subtilty.

The system worked well and afforded a basis of intercourse on which the general superintendent and I often met. Nor did things rest with the store-

house system, for the general superintendent brought me a copy of the hand book of instructions issued by the Interstate Commerce Commission in which operating expenses were classified, and with that as a guide, I found it easy to frame many forms for use in the mechanical department which tended to simplify the records and to displace a more cumbrous system that had grown up hap-hazard. With great adroitness, the general superintendent talked about his new methods to the auditor and the general manager, both of whom he brought to the store to point out improvement, neatly managing to conceal his real ignorance under a blunt manner, always cleverly avoiding controversies, and his was the elation of real victory when some old method was left inoperative. Soon he began to talk Scientific Management, and Efficiency, handling the detestable jargon of theorists very neatly. Meanwhile my salary was handsomely increased and my duties became astonishingly easy so that it began to look as though I had found a sinecure.

Suddenly out of the blue came a thunderbolt. The road was sold, lock, stock and barrel, and it was *sauve que peut* for all and sundry. Some made overtures to bask in the smiles of the new management, some lay low and were thankful for their inconspicuous positions on the general principle that the wind blows hardest on the highest hills. The general superintendent, full of political sagacity, wrote his resignation to the new holders, having previously provided himself with a new position elsewhere, and two days before his departure he called me into his office.

For a time he talked about this and that, and I

had not the slightest suspicion what he was after. Then he went off at a tangent from telling a tale about a tarantula and came out freely and frankly. There were odd glimpses into the philosophy of the man, quaint observations and remarks. Any fool, he said, can master men if he's got the strangle hold and can hire and fire. "If you know you haven't got brains and education, why, find men what has. . . . That's why I stuck by you. . . . A good boss knows how to steal ideas. . . . Every man's ready to kow-tow to the fellow what signs the payroll. . . . If you don't know what to do next, or don't grasp what's goin' on, be a mystery man.' . . . Never be afraid of organized labor because there ain't no brotherhood, and one union'll throw another down, or smash another on strike when it touches the pocket of them as isn't on strike. . . . A man's big by the men what he stands on. . . . Never be afraid of the big man; there's things you know what he don't, but never try to bluff him on the things he's good on."

At the end, with parenthetical remarks which had nothing to do with anything on hand, he told me that he knew of a good position that I could fill as railroad auditor.

"But," said I, "I'm no accountant."

"What of it? There'll be bookkeepers, won't there?" he answered. "Don't be a fool, for there's no fool like the fool afraid of a job. What's a newly elected president but a fellow takin' on a job he knows nothing about? I mean president of the country. And look here, me boy. If there's a crooked streak in you, and I expect there is, it ain't in the money line. That's something. And anyway, I've

recommended you to the man behind the gun. And anyway, with this here road sold out, your job ain't worth ten cents. I listed you as 'undesirable' myself. You was my find. See?"

There was a short silence while he smoked greedily, then he added, "I'm doin' you a good turn. There'll be lots of fun fightin' graft."

Now it fell out as the man said, for before the week was out I received a letter which said that I had been warmly recommended by a well known railroad official as a competent auditor and if I was open to consider an offer, and so on. And also when the new management posted its list of names of men whose services were no longer required, mine was one of the number.

The preliminaries left me free for a couple of weeks during which I applied myself to the study of double-entry bookkeeping and the voucher system, and it seemed to me that the fundamentals which professors of bookkeeping wrap up in mystery, might well be formulated in a dozen words, thus:

Left hand side

Right hand side

(Resources and Losses) (Liabilities and Gains)
Indeed, the bewildering profusion of details flung about by instructors with an exasperating insensibility to directness, may be largely disregarded. As for bookkeeping with special reference to railroad requirements, there is the most excellent and self-explanatory Form for Annual Reports of Earnings as prepared by the Interstate Commerce Commission. I speak without cynicism when I say that having once mastered that, any intelligent man is capable of assuming the duties of railroad auditor with-

out running any risk of exposure because of lack of qualifications in the way of experience.

The railroad, I found, was one of those of which there are a hundred and more in this country, built on faith and not on judgment. It was in an important central state and I shall call it the N. A. & Z. Ry., disguising its real name and the names of individuals concerned for the sake of fairness to some still living, who, heavens knows, have paid enough for their folly. It was standard gauge and only twenty-four miles long, though the original intention was to build on to Pittsburgh one way, and to Cincinnati the other. At one end it touched the Ohio River, at the other a town on a major railroad, and midway there were connections with an electric line which I shall call the C. A. & B.

The important man was Edwin Hibbert, a banker of the traditional, pompous kind, and reputed wealthy. He was urbane and pleasant enough, intensely conceited because of his position, a little testy at times, at others strangely gloomy, though when that mood fell upon him he seemed to wriggle to the surface by a mighty effort. Often there was about him an all-pervading gentleness that had the appearance of a superficial humility, but which turned out to be the outcome of an ever-present fear with a dash of contrition. For Edwin Hibbert, it transpired later, was the tool of "Boss" George B. Cox of Cincinnati, a pawn who had accepted dangerous responsibility in return for the mantle of position. But the ramifications may only be guessed at. Much came out at a trial in the Federal courts, and much perhaps was sidetracked.

"You will find," said Edwin Hibbert to me as we

sat in the Sinton, "that there are certain things on the railroad that look odd. But it's all right. It's all right. It's quite all right. There are, well, vested rights and interests not to be disturbed. I have associates you know. Two of them. My brother and Mr. Lomax. We put up the money and want a man of sagacity and judgment." Then he waved the subject aside airily and became solicitous as to my tastes, in ordering dinner, so that I felt that I was being flatteringly petted in a modified and guarded way.

Mr. Hibbert spoke the truth, for there were odd things, many of them. In all, at the time of my appearance on the scene, four hundred and eighty thousand dollars had been advanced, secured by N. A. & Z. notes with unsold bonds as collateral, for the road was bonded at five hundred thousand dollars, of which four hundred and fifteen thousand dollars worth were unsold. But Mr. Lomax had furnished the cash, or the greater part of it, and the Hibberts, both bankers, had hoodwinked their associate, borrowing money from their own banks and from one another, walking the financial slackwire in dangerous ways.

The Interstate Commerce Commission requiring estimates of the cost of construction, it became necessary to dig into the old vouchers for the information, and soon I seemed to be in a kind of a gladiator's net. I was positive that I had made no mistake, yet what I found seemed impossible. So there was a special audit and what I suspected was verified. There had been at work men with tremendous gifts for graft. In some cases whole payrolls had been drawn for twice. In one case a draft

was made and paid for a carload of rails that was neither ordered nor shipped. An wholly imaginary bridge was drawn for and draft paid. Prices had been falsified. But all had been done in the name of the manager in charge of construction, who had long since disappeared, and when the report with its discrepancies was read by Edwin Hibbert, he was strangely magnanimous. "I suspected, and told you, that certain things might have an off look," he declared, then became pensive.

"When Mr. Lomax returns from Japan, I'll take the matter up with him. In the meantime we must go on. Vacillation will never do. Never do." Then came the appearance of humility. "We must be charitable with a wrongdoer. Eh? All this is why we need a highly trained man competent to see to these things."

Meanwhile the road was losing somewhere between \$8,000 and \$10,000 each year, without taking into account the bond interest, or the taxes, or depreciation. And, obviously, under the circumstances it was quite impossible to maintain the physical integrity of the property, the more because faulty construction and a partly ballasted road-bed resulted in unusually heavy maintenance of equipment.

But there was the tangle. Scattered here and there in banks were notes secured by bonds on which the interest was regularly paid, by Mr. Lomax out of his own pocket, and a half million dollars is not easily wiped out of existence. To throw the road into a receivership would bring the whole flimsy structure to the ground because of the shrinkage of bond values. It seemed that there was nothing for

it but to chase phantoms and impossible hopes. The problem was more than interesting. There was a savor of dangerous adventure about it that made it fascinating. General manager succeeded general manager, some half contemptuous of the job, some full of fatuous complacency, one who started to build a bungalow on the line for a golden haired divinity until a sack of cement traced from the company storehouse proved his undoing, but each threw up his hands and settled down to enjoy his salary and his expense account and his annual passes as long as he could and dared. Trained statisticians and economists looked into the case, charged specialist prices, portentously shook heads and spoke of foresight, and possible amalgamations, and extensions of the line, but without offering any helpful suggestions. Then came union organizers who talked of the rights of labor and the brotherhood of man, and capitalistic monopolists and industrial war, and how non-resident owners kept workmen in ignorance and poverty, so the cost of labor sensibly increased. It was clear that all the mistakes and follies of the past were heaping themselves for a crash, and soon there would be no more bonds available for use as doubtful collateral and snarls and knots appeared at every turn. Day by day we floundered deeper.

One day Edwin Hibbert had a dream of magnificent prosperity when someone suggested the amalgamation of the N. A. & Z. and the C. A. & B. with its little subsidiary road, the R. & G. It was John Law piling an Indian scheme on to his Mississippi scheme. The manager of the C. A. & B., a very expert liar, was active for the combination. He

had an eye for his own aggrandizement. Yet as an executive he was damnably deficient or an ignorant imposter filled with an invincible determination to hold his job though the heavens crashed to earth. Everyone knows the type, frauds pure and simple. They are industrial parasites who, jarred loose from their hosts, rarely possess either wits or energy sufficient to make their own living. This particular fellow eventually became a vendor of fountain pens, just as Warriner of the Big Four who stole hundreds of thousands found no place to fill except that of a day laborer and as still another who flourished on this little stage for a while as general manager found his real level running a grocery store when the foundations were knocked from under him.

But Hibbert, driven to continual expedients and in his desperation full of an easy gullibility, was like some old alchemist with a vision of dross turned to gold. It was evident that sober argument was useless, was taken, indeed, for disparagement. There was the nightmare of his bank with his personal notes by way of assets. So with a kind of insane courage he took the leap and the whole matter was settled at a private conference and three non-paying roads were amalgamated into a hundred mile system at a stroke of a pen. Mr. Lomax, a very sick man on the eve of going on a surgeon's operating table, gave his signature and the thing was done. Yet a more insane agreement under the circumstances could hardly be imagined. Twenty thousand dollars were to be at once expended upon the road-bed of the electric line and two new cars were to be bought. A big bridge across a dangerous river was to be immediately strengthened and repaired. A steadily

increasing rental was to be paid, the amount of which was to be deducted from the purchase price, and there was a secondary gentleman's agreement by the terms of which a parallel and competing line was to be abandoned. Nor did it appear, until later, that state inspectors had ordered the electric line to do many of the things specified in the purchase contract for the sake of public safety.

At the time, sick of the whole tangle, I was on the point of leaving for El Oro, Mexico and had offered my resignation. But Hibbert would have none of it. Nothing would do but that I should stay and see the whole thing through. He was tremendously insistent. We were, he said, on the verge of success. I had fought irregularity and confusion and disorder, and must see the whole thing through. If it was a matter of money, I might state my own price, and so on. He was facile in persuasion, and in the end did not conceal his fear that a change just then might mean utter exposure and collapse. He hinted more than he said; he hinted at bank failures, at financial paralysis, at distress that would touch little tradesmen.

Suddenly, somehow, I was full of a sort of explosive passion. Furiously I wanted to fight, to match myself for one fierce struggle against grafters and parasites and all the tribe sycophantic that plotted and tricked and planned. A little shiver ran up the back of my neck as if a light hand had stroked the hair the wrong way and I knew that I would stay in the game although at a single word I could be free from it all and be careless in the land of blue skies and bad whiskey. Swiftly things ran through my mind. For Hibbert I had no respect, but for the

shadowy Mr. Lomax who seemed to be the victim of circumstances, as also was I, though in a different way, and who was apparently struggling in entangling coils, I was full of sympathy. Yet I did not know him, nor had I ever had anything to do with him except indirectly through business letters acknowledging reports. But in those there had been passages that revealed the man. Thus, once: "The situation is bad enough, but it seems that a man must be punished for his credulity and his trust in others, as well as for his folly." Again there had been this: "I have somehow accepted heavy burdens because I trusted my associates." Another time he had written, after saying that a certain report gave him the first real understanding of the case of the railroad: "It is with no martyr spirit that I say that these entanglements have come upon me because I had found no cause to impugn the veracity of an associate. . . ." And this, which sent a glow all over me: ". . . if only there were more men like the manager of my factory in whose neighborhood there is always order and integrity." Because of those evidences, I felt the presence of a true man and disagreeable things were easier to face.

I must appear for a time as a sort of central figure because I acted with swift decision, but what took place was by no means intended as an heroic gesture and even at the time, it seemed that another self did what was done while the normal "I" watched, a cool spectator. Make what you can of it.

I have intimated that Black, the manager of the electric line was a monument of ineptitude who falsified accounts, flattered his employers, deliberately

cultivated inaccuracy in his reports, bullied his subordinates, and was extremely pliant in the way of making notes. But he had held his job, and, like many others who talk about responsibility, in time of trouble had shifted the burden to the shoulders of the man next lower down, knowing that he in turn would pass the buck until it was held by some unlucky fellow too far down to count. En passant, you will find in a railroad accident that it is nearly always the dead man who was to blame.

Prejudices are solid as stone walls and I had nothing but dislike for him though he treated me with a kind of Uriah Heep cordiality. I could not take his hand because it was white, cold and clammy. I could not look at his face because it was large, and white, and carried a mirthless smile. His face and his hand he could not help, but his slant-eyed character he made himself. To think of working side by side with such a fellow was as unthinkable as to think of sleeping with a corpse. He reeked with indirectness but he was subtle. To discover a falsification and prove it, was to do nothing more than to make things unpleasant for an office clerk.

But one day I found a case of flagrant crooked entry and charged him with it, charged him with deliberate perjury before the office force, and when he climbed on his high horse as general manager I exploded into passion and told him that if he did not resign before noon, I would report him to the Interstate Commerce Commission and call for an investigation. At first the man made a stagy manifestation of indignation, then he flattened perceptibly, tried to recover, gave a little laugh that was almost a whimper, then began to whine. It was pitiful and it

was nauseating to see the man thus, in the midst of those over whom he had lorded so long, those who had flattered him. And, as might be expected, of the dozen in the room, not one spoke a word, or raised a hand in his defense. The fallen king has no courtiers.

But the man had his friends in the dummy directorate and as soon as possible a special meeting was called and I was notified to appear.

Coincidentally with all that, on his death-bed, Mr. Lomax told the sorry tale of his unwise investment and its ramifications to that right-hand man to whom he referred in one of his letters, and A. J. Sutley, manager of one of the Lomax industries. Also within an hour, on the Lomax bank there was made a draft for \$30,000 without the shadow of a cause except that a bank examiner was inspecting the Hibbert bank in the ordinary course and without any suspicion that anything was wrong. Things were sweeping together like tornado clouds.

Then into the arena came a new knight. From St. Louis he came, and it was A. J. S., a brisk and efficient man, with him an expert accountant. Technically I was under arrest, and all night we sat in a room at the Sinton Hotel, books and accounts on the bed, on chairs, on the little desk, while the expert took in the salient features of the case. By that time the aggregate amount involved went into millions and the loopings and entanglements reached far, touching another railroad, two banks, unsuspected men in far cities. Special skill runs to routine, but it did not in the expert accountant's case. He was like a keen harrier, finding a trail here, a scent there, a suspicion that speedily became a certainty else where; putting this and that together with uncanny

accuracy. It was fascinating to see him. Then at last: "You've come clean," he said.

But there was gloomy wrath on the face of A. J. S. He heard, but there was no word of praise or blame. He sat there, a stony, uncompromising man, self-contained; a down-right kind of man.

At last, "We'll raid the rats," he said.

So we sped in a taxi to the General Offices and flung into the room where the five directors sat, and A. J. S. turned the key in the door and stood at the head of the table, alert in all his movements.

"We are here," he said, "to beat this swindling game. It's a dummy directorate, and you'll take your medicine like dummies. . . . Finger, pitch any man out of the window who makes a move."

He was like a conqueror with a thousand trumpets. On the table he flung a bundle of notes and some bonds. "There's my authority if you want to know, and now to work. You, whatever your name is, will resign and Mr. George here will take your place. Transfer stock and all that stuff, and do it properly. And you'll resign in my favor: and you'll get out and give way to Finger here."

There was a scampering to obey. It was Cromwell and the parliament over again. In a bold sweep he did what would have taken weeks of delicate tact and afforded the enemy time to get to cover. Hibbert alone made a dramatic gesture, like an abdicated king, but A. J. S. cut him short with a prophecy that there would be time for theatricals in Atlanta. In less than ten minutes the battle was won and the campaign clear for major operations. A. J. S. was elected president, George, the accountant, vice-president, and I became general manager.

Then came the unscrambling and the separating of the roads; the disposing of them; the voluntary surrender of the Lomax fortune to reimburse his bank for the original investment; the going to Atlanta of Hibbert after a much postponed trial; the strange departure of the other Hibbert to Australia; the formation of a syndicate to buy up non-paying roads for dismantling purposes.

By that last, fat fortunes were made by shrewd Jewish traders. It was the finishing touch, the extraction of a valuable essence from a vast fermentation. Without that touch, the whole thing seems as dry and meaningless as the mash thrown aside from a bootlegger's still.

HIGH-HEARTED COMPANIONS

William Marion Reedy

I COUNT it a high privilege to have been asked by William Marion Reedy a short while ago, to do the best that I could for the Mirror so that he might snatch a little rest. "I am tired," he said, "and want to nestle in Mother Nature's arms awhile. I want to see the sunrise and the sea, the hills and the sunset."

He was tired. There was pathos in his words. One moment he looked old and weary, and the next strangely full of good spirits and fully rejuvenated. Passion and circumstances tire a heart sorely, and, as with the rest of us, there was the element of tragedy that was in his life.

So, though fully conscious of my shortcomings, I did what I could, looking for the day when he would return, half hoping for a word of commendation.

I was not alone. There stood with me, shoulder to shoulder, Reedy's brave little office partner and right hand, Alma Meyer. For seven years she had been a loyal and faithful helper, the busy, self-sacrificing soul who had made possible much that was done in the past dark months. For Reedy had been sick a long time.

So at last came the day, the unexpected end, with the message that, while for a moment meaningless, startled and stunned us, as they who are suddenly waked from a deep sleep are startled and stunned.

Today instead of handclasps and thanks, there are ineffable longings in Reedy's workshop. One is mute in sorrow.

But Reedy, ever full of generous belief, of enthusiasm and of hopefulness, would resent any sadness of farewell as he departed on his endless cruise. For surely he did not fear the day, for whoso thus fears, must fear every day. He was not of that sort. Still, hearts are heavy here. Sorrow cannot be gilded, and there is a cold hatred for the blind Fury with the abhorred shears.

Have you, who never saw him face to face, and there are thousands and tens of thousands of you who knew him only through his writings, formed an image dimly of what manner of man he was? I would like to tell you in plain words. But it is hard to sit in this office, his workshop, and detach one's mind from the spirit that seems to be hovering about. It was a part of him, the office. In a way, it was his shell as his body was his shell. There are his books, familiar books, to which he turned, as at times one turns to a well-loved friend. A row of them is on his desk. Well thumbed books they are, with marked passages, and they fall open at places, and on the pages one finds lines of beauty. The first book I thus chanced upon when I came, opened at page eighty-four, and these three lines had a pencil mark at their side:

And say what you will, death is a rod.
But I see a light that shines and shines
And I rather think it's God.

Thus Edgar Lee Masters in his Songs and Satires, and the poem was entitled, William Marion Reedy.

Then there are the mural decorations. There are photographs of groups, Reedy and his friends, Reedy at a ball game, but, after all not so much of Reedy. Mostly, it is Reedy's Mirror. There are the original drawings of front cover designs. These things were dear to him. He it was who inspired them. Most dear, though, were his friends. There are many photographs lovingly inscribed. Masters, Fels, Mrs. Fels, James H. Barry, John J. Jennings, James A. Read, Strauss. Then there are a few pen sketches, a water color or two, especially a Venetian gondola, restful, quiet, in the Japanese style. A bookcase holds his books of reference, and there, in a reserved corner, locked from profane hands, are volumes he prized for their associations. I see Sara Teasdale, Dreiser, Masters, Starrett, Benét, Wheelock, Untermeyer and others.

But the correspondence files! The drawers full of letters! The burden of work must have been immense. There are letters from world-famous men in every sphere of activity: literary, artistic, musical, scientific. There are letters from young authors with copies of his letters in reply. These are helpful letters, encouraging letters, letters of advice, of criticism, of hope held out, and, sometimes, a letter of gentle dissuasion, for Reedy was truthful.

There are curious things here, too. Carved paper knives, and things wrought by cunning hands in far parts of the world. Kodak pictures, desk furnishings, nic-nacs and quaint toys. Amid all of these, the man seemed to be happy. Seemed, I said, because while, even as the rest of us, he had his burdens that press and crush, his load did not seem so heavy, for, spiritually, he was a strong man and bore his

burden gracefully. "No winter," he said, "was so hard as we feared, nor summer hot."

Reedy was a robust looking man, tall, square-shouldered. Nature had wrought well, and a sound mind was in a big body. Sanguine he was and ardent, a tree that had grown full straight, and in which, in its days of freshness, the sap flowed vigorously. Insistent was the flesh and the blood of him that compelled him even as it compels you and me. Such a nature may be in youth what less gifted souls call imprudent, extravagant. But such natures are also loyal, and generous, and affectionate. They have a superfluity. They give of their spiritual wealth. They love.

Giving love, they receive love. Therein are they doubly rich. Many of us, as we go through life, pause now and then to look around and find our comrades fallen. One by one they fall, and year by year the ranks of those we marched and worked with are thinned, until it is no far vision to see ourselves alone on the battlefield. Men of Reedy's nature are more fortunate. True, his comrades also fell, but new ones rose up day after day and looked to him. Some of them, many of them, he lifted into light from obscurity.

And his philosophy? This:

*Live your lives to the full, for life is fleeting.
Love with full hearts, for hearts must die.*

That is all I can say. Many who knew him better must speak. Reedy scorned adulation. All of you know that, and it would be an insult to his memory to attempt anything that he himself would thrust aside as deification of the departed. But it may be said, and said truthfully, that he was an

honorable, an industrious, a just and a worthy man.

If there is truth in the tale that so many believe and find consolation in believing, I can see him standing upright, clear-eyed and unashamed, saying: *"Master, I come with the life I have lived. Here are the talents Thou gavest. Thou art Judge."*

Sandburg

FOR more than two years I had not seen Sandburg, and then he was out at my place to which he walked through mud and rain. When we shook hands in greetings at Chicago he repeated the words he had said in parting at my gate, and the very words were in my mind.

He is the same charming, genial, attractive character, always at perfect ease, always full of an unconquerable optimism. I can never look at him without being reminded of some warrior-lord on the eve of adventure, listening to the chanting of odes inaudible to the rest of us. I like to picture him all armor-clad and sword-girt, about to step over the gunwale of some Viking ship bound for the sailing of strange seas. He has that air about him. Far-seeing, hawk-sharp, penetrating eyes; tall and long-armed; hair iron-gray; strong-looking and sober of aspect—there you have something of Sandburg the great heart. To me he seems to belong to the company of heroes and fit to sit in Valhalla with William Morris, and the splendid Cunninghame Graham, and that Tail-lefer who sang before the armies as he threw high his mace and caught it again, and Hereward the Wake who cut his way through opposing hosts, and Abbot Samson who knew no fear.

Mark this. Carl Sandburg does not trouble himself to tickle those who have charge of the public trumpets, consequently you hear less of him than his

work deserves. But let me beg of you to get his books, his Chicago, his Corn-Huskers, his Slabs of the Sunburnt West. Perhaps at first you'll not understand, may even be perplexed. But read some of the things aloud. Soon you will discover fecundity, vigor, descriptive power, emotional susceptibility. Surrender yourself to the man as you surrender yourself to a playwright when you enter the theater. Doing so you will find in Sandburg something of the enthusiasm of a child, that, seeing a vision of beauty where duller witted elders see nothing, is anxious to tell of that wonder.

“Night from a railroad car window
Is a great, dark soft thing
Broken across with slashes of light.”

That kind of thing. An outspoken appreciation of the beauty of common things which you have seen so often that you do not see at all. He mirrors for you the beauty of the fierce, powerful things of the city; he beckons to you and points out the splendor of the workaday world; he shows you new wonders in that great and mysterious thing called civilization. He is a singer of the strength and the sweetness of activity.

Perhaps you imagine Sandburg in some past age, imagine him vivid, alert and impassioned, singing of the beauty of the fullness of life, of the lands that lay beyond hostile seas, and so urging his fellows to energy and activity and away from the eternal doing of unimportant things—then you will better understand him. In some such fashion I sometimes imagine him, as a Sandburg of the days of Lief Ericson, inspiring the men at the oars to effort,

making them hear the infinite music of the whipping wind and thundering water, forcing upon them the significance of what was happening, nerving them to face the beating seas, urging them to fiercer fight against opposing forces. For otherwise northern oceans had never been crossed and heroes would not have done their deeds, and instead of derring-do there might have been the dull and dreary round, the black cliff wall, the spiritless business of working and eating and drinking.

Get him in one of his Greek moods when he is full of childlike wonder and admiration and you might well carry him to the gates of Tophet in a chariot drawn by ten thousand Tartar horses caparisoned in cloth of gold and heralded by a thousand silver trumpets, and he would never give a thought to anything but the pageant that streamed past as he moved. He is one of those unaffectedly for the simpler pleasures. There are times when he is indeed a man of mystical rapture who seems to walk in an enchanted garden. I am setting the man down exactly as I find him. For him, every moment is an adventure. Burning with that devouring fire of inspiration, he is like a man on some vast urgent business, with no eyes for anything but the glory of veiled hills and purple distances, of dim-green woods and far stretching vineyards, of silver-blue sky and sun-gold roads. He is no more elaborate than a child. Indeed, I think that all the fierce rebellion in him is nothing more than a resolute avoidance of complications and intricacies.

But here is the thing that I want particularly to say. The part of Sandburg usually ignored, because of that passion to unite life with poetry, which pas-

sion blinds men to his other qualities, is his enthusiasm for the beautiful things of the world. He is all enthralled by the pageant of conscious life forever unrolling. I could cite examples by the score from his printed work, but choose to take the man himself. Here then is an incident given as showing his transient but vivid emotion.

We had been sitting on a hill side overlooking a great stretch of country, and our talk was mainly of the songs of hoboos and of waterside men. I hummed a tune or two and he took them down in some queer notation of his own which was quite incomprehensible to me. Presently, as he talked, I fell to watching the ants on an ant trail at my feet, while listening. In the middle of a sentence Sandburg stopped abruptly, but I did not look up, supposing him to be pondering. There are often chasms in his talk which you must bridge as best as you can if you are unable to fly with him. Sometimes, he too is elliptic. So I waited. And soon with a note of deep awe in his voice, half-whispering as if some tremendous thing had burst into view, almost indeed in the manner of a man who expressed deep emotion at sight of some sudden calamity or disaster, he said: "My God! Look at that!" Then silence fell.

The shadows of a fear was on me. I looked up, startled; glanced at him and his far-seeing eyes; looked away at the hill; looked at the ribbon of road below half expecting some tragic sight, some tremendous force at work, perhaps something heart-breaking. There was that potent emotion in his words.

Suddenly I saw, and seeing became lifeless-still. On a slim locust thorn, not eight yards away, a cardinal was perched, bird entrancingly beautiful in

its brave red against the tender green of a tall sycamore. And when an arrow of sunlight fell on it, it became more brilliantly beautiful. So near it was, so clear was the light, we saw its sparkling eye, its jetty-edged bill, its princely crest. As if all that loveliness was not enough, it burst into triumphant music for us until an answer in song came like an echo. For a full minute it perched in our sight, balancing delicately on the swaying branch, then took to flight, a flash of living fire, darting into the green glade where were fern-fringed boulders, bent upon some high and splendid business.

But there had been an answering rapture. In Sandburg was appreciation of the thing exquisite and fine. But who, except a true poet, can be amazed and astonished day by day?

So, to Sandburg the vivid, to Sandburg the high-hearted, Hail!

Paul Honoré, an Artist

I HAVE just seen the illustrations, made from wood blocks by Paul Honoré, for three more of my books. Honoré is a wonder. He gets the robustness of the outlaws and the delicate fancy of fairyland with equal facility. There is exuberant life, there is whimsical fancy, there is humor in his work. One of his headings, picturing a youth and maiden flying through the air by the aid of the magic stone is a most graceful conception, and there is a spirit of *diablerie* in his treatment of the witch and the image man, that is glorious indeed.

Passing the Scarab Club I saw a light in Honoré's studio, so dismissed the taxi and went in. Honoré was there, working.

On the wall was a great canvas picturing some strolling players riding asses, all sunshine and bright color. Honoré is a delightful painter of such scenes. It was all sparkle and liveliness. Earlier in the day he had taken me to see a mural decoration in a high school, his work. One panel struck me as being particularly excellent—some young rowers stripped to the waist, their rippling muscles, their glistening skins, the play of the leaping water, their wind-blown hair. In it you caught Honoré's artistic and social personality. And in the studio were sketches in much the vein, vivid things full of vitality, some in black and white, some very striking in color and arrangement, all of them show-

ing masterly economy. For me, Honoré's work always conveys a sense of spaciousness and symmetry; his groups fall into place as natural incidents which complete a general scheme.

We smoked and talked far into the night, or rather the morning, trying to understand ourselves. I think, when I look back, that we were trying to consider the difficulty of disentangling the individual self from the social self. At least that occupied us part of the time. Another part of the time we talked about the education of children, wondering how much the noise and the glitter of city life warped, and how much it made for a kind of reliance; and whether independence and individuality were destroyed in the young by all that blatancy and booming in newspapers and hoarding advertisements, and all that conflict and friction in crowded places.

Honoré is one of those sane men who will not let his absorption in his art interfere with those closer duties, the development of personal character in his own children. There wholesome education occupies him very much and he is wisely conscious that man may not live on art alone, and cannot live without bread. He is all for the good, old-fashioned virtues of economy, discipline, behavior, in spite of the fact that it is fashionable to attack them. He is all against luxury and display both individually and socially. I think that most men who are robust and virile are much of the same persuasion.

I set Honoré down as a man who has fought his way to where he is with astonishing obstinacy. He is genial, good-natured, and generous. He can drive a bargain with commendable firmness, I should say. He can look at a picture or a scene without any of

that stupid contortioning favored by fakes and frauds, such as making opera glasses out of fists, shading the eyes, squinting, or drawing curves in the air with his thumb. He is au fait with social etiquette and a stranger to intriguing and plotting for business. He is sound in his allegiance to the best that has been done in the past, but not out of sympathy with new experiments, and experience has led him to believe that certain fundamental things have been done in a way perhaps not to be surpassed. He works with business-like energy, keeps an eye on developments outside of his chosen line of work, and avoids all sensationalism and humbug. So he is a Man, and it is my warmest wish that some day he will achieve a crowning triumph and reap the harvest he deserves.

George Sterling

HERE comes a letter from George Sterling, telling me that Mencken expects to go to San Francisco in November, and that Edgar Lee Masters was there lately. The letter ends with this: "October in Arkansas! How beautiful it must be. I wish I were there." To which I reply: "It is. Come; and let me play the host!"

As to October in Arkansas, a word. We have not yet had our first frost, so the orchard is rich and red; the sheep are lazy fat under the trees, spending their days munching wind-fall apples. Just now a hawk seems to watch them. Very beautiful is the valley with its yellowing corn, its bright green grass, the brightness enhanced by the rich wooded hills. The symmetrical elms are at their best. Oaks are still in full leaf, metallic-hued, but the sycamores have turned to pale-gold. Already the impatient locust trees have shed their leaves and their dark pods, so stand stark. Tall luxuriant clumps of blood-red sassafras are everywhere. In the woods are wonder avenues of golden sunlight making strange arabesques on soft mosses and gravel walks. The setting sun is a giant ball of molten gold. No sooner than he has dropped behind the blue hills than we feel the chill of evening, and the sky is gorgeous blue and violet and crimson; but our days are warm and bright, much like August in Massachusetts.

An hour ago, Helen came running to my forest

office gate, crying: "Oh! Look how pretty these are." She held up a mass of branches, brilliantly yellow and scarlet and green. It would have made a picture for a painter. For she herself was dressed in brief green tunic, with feathered hat and long hose. In her left hand she carried a bow and a few arrows. For she and Ann and Herbert were Robin Hood and his men, so had dressed for the part. I, it appeared, was Friar Tuck; my quiet dogs his fierce bloodhounds; the office a hermit's cell in which I pray.

At the Bohemian Club I met George Sterling. A musically accented man, this Sterling, trenchant in speech, a strange mixture of radicalism and conservatism, full of contagious cheer, on occasion a kind of incisive Montaigne, buoyant and full of humor, craver of sympathetic speech, warm-hearted, generous, observant, frank, masculine-minded in every respect. I know only three men who live more in touch with the natural beauty of the earth, who are less afraid of the criticism of other beings. And in some measure the one implies the other. Your open-air man, and I have in mind those shoved by Fate in the midst of crowds, cannot be elaborate and pompous about life, and pomposity certainly bespeaks fear. This Sterling has about him a frankness that is never fastidious, a simplicity that is never abashed, an ease that is never embarrassed. I think that if it were possible for man to rise up and go whithersoever he would in time and space, Sterling would seek out Surrey and Walton and Sir Philip Sidney to sit a while on celestial mountains rejoicing in the company lovable, gentle, sweet-tempered. But after a while, because of that strength and energy and joy in him, he would be persuading

them to other spheres, inducing them to embark in his company on some crusade into other regions of the soul and mind. Then flushed in the delight of triumph, strong in that vital energy of his, his companions in a kind of happy subjectivity, off he would carry them to Walhalla, bursting into some comfortable house of refreshment he knew of where sat at revel Tom Jones, and Falstaff, and Reedy, and Mark Twain, and Bobby Burns, and Joachim Miller, and Sam Weller, and Captain Costigan, and Bret Harte, and Jack London. Then the door would be fast locked against discussion and argument, against all that stingy vanity of self-importance, against all that nonsense of prejudice and stony opinion; but the windows would be opened wide to give on glowing and shining realms where were jollitics and true merriment and the golden sunlight of real enduring fellowship.

I have said that George Sterling is a man intellectually honest and with standards of his own. Because of that it is a privilege to hear him talk of those he knew intimately. He overleaps conventional barriers and gains a fair and open field. So there were delightful piquancies when he told me of Ambrose Bierce, and Jack London, and Upton Sinclair, and Masfield. Talking about those and others, it was clear that Sterling's largest duty was to be faithful and honest. For instance, of Masfield he told me with what pleasure he anticipated a walk with the wanderer-poet and how, when at last they were together, Masfield, with a kind of benignity as it were, began lecturing on the drink evil and held close to that discourse throughout the walk. Sterling, anxious to hear all about sea life, and Cape Horn

waters, and England, chafed a little, but Masefield was not to be turned from his impetuous rhetoric. . . . As for Ambrose Bierce,—and Sterling knew him well, was his almost daily companion for a time, I had another vision substituted for the gloomy figure I had imagined him—a man with a crust of stiffness. Sterling threw a new light on the man and I saw him an accomplished, even brilliant talker full of courtesy and friendliness and *bonhomie*. . . . Then there's Jack London; but Sterling's reminiscences are his own and some day he must tell his own story, for he has notable things to say.

George Sterling is dead.

He was my friend, and I loved him. So I am impatient of the censures of rigid people who deplore the manner of his death, the way of which was the way of Chatterton and of Davidson. Nor is there reason to hide the truth, for Sterling himself insisted upon facts in all their bluntness. So, that being clear, to other matters.

He was a good man, a faithful friend, a most generous soul with the chastened taste of the true scholar. And while there was a fund of wholesome laughter in him there was also an elusive quality, a strange unworldliness and unreality which affected me like a moonlit snow-covered landscape. Something of which I did not know, something high and urgent, and perhaps terrifying,

. . . Desires and Adorations,
Winged Persuasions, and veiled Destinies,
Splendors and Glooms and glimmering Incarnations
Of hopes and fears and twilight fantasies;

And Sorrow, with her family of sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

His letters revealed him as a man who could think bluntly and fiercely, as one determined to speak freely of what he admired or loved. They gave confidence and awoke affection. And they breathed desire for friendship, for understanding, for a "thinking aloud" chum. I am sure that he yearned for fellowship as keenly as did William Morris. So we had a good time corresponding, and when we met, it was as though we had been in close personal touch for years and years. Nor more perfectly natural and unaffected man ever lived, I thought.

As poet he strongly resented the imputation of being "modern." He would have almost nothing to do with so-called free-verse. Poetry was, with him, the flowering into words of a mood or an emotion—but flowering, mark you, not a leaping, or a spouting, or a gushing. I should say that he was a poet by inherent and uninherited original quality of soul.

A genius, this George Sterling; but also a wayward passionate heart and a rebellious will. And, impatient, he wrenched apart the gates when he had a mind to enter into the land of the leal.

Which reminds me: You may remember the story I wrote called *Eric*, a tale of a lad with a poetic spark in a discouraging environment. It was first printed in *All's Well*, later reprinted by O'Brien as one of his three-star stories. Well, when George Sterling read it he sat down and wrote me saying that it rejoiced his heart that I had found a striving

lad, but grieved him that the boy had gone to a city. Further, he said that he would be willing to send a check to aid the young poet if I could find him. And that was characteristic of George, who was all sympathy and kindness. When we met, George and I, he recalled the incident and laughed heartily, saying that it was the only time he had been taken in by a tale, failing to distinguish fact from fiction.

The last memory I have of him is as he stood at the Oakland ferry-slip waving farewell. I remember especially his hands, sensitive hands, with fingers long and flexible; and as we clasped hands in parting, my own seemed clumsy in comparison.

He insisted that I should accept one of his treasures, which was a death-mask of his friend Jack London, one of three, for Charmion London had another, the sculptor a third. When I objected, saying it was too great a gift, George made answer: "Well, don't you want to accept my gift?" which left me with nothing to say. It reminded me of another George, my friend, who, when we traveled together, insisted upon doing the thing so thoroughly in the way of playing host, that I made a kind of objection. "Well," said the other George, "don't you want to be my guest?" Neither of them would budge an inch in the sacred rite of hospitality.

Bishop Brown

TO hear some people talk, a stranger would think that William Montgomery Brown was either Satan made flesh, spiked tail, cloven hoof, horns and all the rest, or else a maniac at large. Whereas he is neither. The truth is that both the Bishop and his wife are charming folk, gentle and courteous, who might have stepped out of the pages of Jane Austen. At least, Mrs. Brown might have so done. Bishop Brown is more like a Dr. Primrose broken-hearted at his failure through years of preaching to make mankind look on Christianity as something more than a mere counsel of perfection.

Here is a true account of what happened at Brownella Cottage, in Galion, Ohio. We were sitting in a little room, the Bishop, Mrs. Brown and I, and the old gentleman was expressing his generous idealism, his genuine sympathy with the working man and his devotion to his well-being. I gathered that the Bishop considered himself to have been a laggard during all those years of preaching, and was rather in a state of astonishment that he had not realized sooner that the Episcopal church was deeply infected with commercialism. He impressed me as a silver-haired warrior who had suddenly seen that the cause for which he had most heartily striven was an unworthy one, and so becoming filled with the wine of youthful adventurousness, grew zealous to fight under the new banner. The little lady, his wife, was all faith

in him. Had he declared for Osiris or Thor, she would have followed him without moral or intellectual shock, would have declared for the new belief with an ardor truly admirable. Presently as the talk went on, the Bishop quoted someone thus: "If thou fulfillest the law which God has given thee, the law of love and liberty, then thou makest music before God, and thy life is a hymn of praise to God." Somehow that led to talk of music, churchly music, and the gentle lady spoke of the uplifting power of a choir and of how the beauty of music stirred her. There were, she said, psalm tunes and noble church melodies, anthems and service music, and for these she always hungered. So I went across the room to the piano, an old-time instrument with thin plaintive notes, and I played for her a hymn or two of her choosing, and, presently, we came to the one called Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, a noble and stirring piece. At that she stood up and sang, in a little quavering voice, and the Bishop too was moved by his ineradicable instinct. For he stood by her side, the hymn book in his hand, his head slightly upraised; took her left hand in his right and sang most heartily and sincerely to the end of the song, and I am sure that the two of them were full of the most spiritual and elevated affections. They stood there, in a moment of exaltation, utterly guileless, simple and gentle, full of mutual trust and affection.

But of course, that has nothing to do with the heresy case. Heresy, as I understand it, is a term that has no meaning today, and is a legacy from the old days when doubt was supposed to be inspired by the devil. To the Episcopalian, the Catholic is a heretic and vice versa. Bishop Brown has become a

heretic because he has replaced redemption by evolution and his religion is very much like the religion of John Fiske, or of Leo Tolstoy, or of any hundred philosophers who talk of Moral Ideas and Fundamentalism. But the Bishop is not a good exponent of his philosophy. He is like a man who has been led along a new path by a light which has dazzled him so that he cannot explain to others how he came to his new place. He is still a little confused because of the great upheaval that stirred him to the depths. But at bottom, the new creed of the Bishop is simple. Also it is old as the hills. The whole duty of man, he holds, is to be a center of order. Only that and nothing more. There must be order, first, last and all the time. As a part of that order he looks for social organization, hence he calls himself a socialist, or communist, or bolshevist—it does not much matter which. I think that on the whole his religion does not differ very materially from that of Comte's. But whatever the Bishop chooses to call himself, there has been no break in his emotional energy. Because of that, he is quite truthful and entirely logical when he says that he can still repeat his paternoster and his credo without doing violence to his beliefs. For the rest, I would interpret the Bishop's viewpoint something like this: Ethics is the science of good character and right conduct, and it is based on our moral experience and our moral judgment, and should be kept independent of all theology, just as the science of correct thinking is, or political economy, and as all other sciences or practical arts are. The trouble is that a terrible rag-tag and bob-tail have flocked to his camp and so confused the issue.

On the other side there is the invincible ignorance of the old armadillo shelled conventionalists, so you have a pretty tea-cup tempest and very much ado about nothing in particular.

The Midland Man

AND John T. Frederick, what of him?
A man through and through, gentlemen!

A scholar.

An enthusiast for literature.

Thinking of him, a passage in a letter I once had from Carl Van Vechten, comes to mind. For Van Vechten wrote of All's Well and Frederick's paper the Midland, saying: "It is on such sincere literary efforts as these that the future of American literature hangs." Frederick is patient as Griselda, hopeful as Penthesilean. The cataract of manuscript never wearies him. He is tolerant of letter writers and advice seekers. He will read the most unattractive looking stuff, I am told, thinking himself well repaid if he finds one grain of good in a ton of chaff. Whereas I tire easily at manuscript reading, so may and perhaps do miss much that is worthwhile. And it is good to learn what those about him think of him. A fine, generous, noble-minded fellow—that's how he is summed up.

But I can't quite understand his self-sacrifice. He is like Reedy, giving his best talents to others and letting his own light hide under a bushel.

He is a slim-built man, much younger than I had supposed him to be judging from the maturity of his work, and very tall. And he knows literature. Oh, he *knows* it, and not the textbook of it. And he has a power of literary expression too. Also a depth

of insight. And he is an exceptionally diligent and conscientious student of modern writers. If you would like to know the kind of soul companion he will probably seek when he passes to the groves of Amenti, I'll tell you. It will be Izaak Walton. There's that unaffected kindness about both of them that they must, inevitably, fly together, like steel to magnet. They'll make a fine pair of simple optimists. And, naturally, grouped about the angler must be others, sitting about in some place of quiet charm: Tom Hood, I think; also Washington Irving of the genial sunny disposition; and Emerson, and John Burroughs, and Arthur Hugh Clough, and Newman, and Crabbe, and Keble, and Goldsmith, and Thomas Browne, and Raleigh, and Surry, and Spenser. They'll be glad to be together and unanimous where they can have a little quiet conversation. There'll be a sense of pleasant triumph about them at having safely reached the quiet after all the homely wrack of things, like wayfarers after a hard march resting in a comfortable inn. Doubtless you know the kind of men I have in mind. Literary, yes, but not necessarily so. But certainly clean-living men, men courageous and unselfish and generous and kind and considerate. Men incapable of taking anything remotely resembling an advantage of another. Bayards all. Men with the finest sense of justice which the human mind can frame, as someone puts it—Wordsworth, I think. Men who possess a number of fine qualities which are exceptional, and possess them too in an exceptional degree.

You get an idea of the kind of man John T. Fredericks is, don't you?

The Texas Ranger

WALKING towards the Fort Worth library, I heard my name called. I turned to see a bright-eyed young woman who burst out with, "A man who knows Cunninghame Graham wants to see you." That was sufficient to set me agog. So there were explanations and questions, and my lady left me to find the man. Throughout the day there were near approaches to the meeting; I had left a place five minutes before he came, or he had just stepped out as I entered and that kind of thing. Then at last Fate was kind and we met, and, lo, and behold! I knew the man's face, but dimly. At first it was associated with a memory of Billings, Montana, but that would not do. Then somehow it seemed to have connection with Tex Rickard, but my mind shot from that to Tex Austin. Then to cowboys. Then to Graham himself. At that I had it with a leap. El Rodeo, of course. The Great International Contest of which Charles Simpson made pictures and sketches, among them an excellent one of the man before me. All that passed in mental flashes during the time the man and I walked towards one another with hands outstretched. For it was Tom R. Hickman, Senior Captain of the Texas Rangers, the second man to enter the arena at Wembley—riding judge—the man said by Graham to have one of the best seats in a saddle that he had ever seen—the man whose brone was so admired that it stayed in London.

Hickman bears on his face the marks of his outdoor calling. He walks as a horseman walks. He has the positive character of a man accustomed to command. He has that air which proclaims pretense to be disgraceful. There is that kindly gravity about him that you find in old-time frontiersmen. And, to use Graham's words, he "often smiled so that his teeth appeared white as hailstones."

So we talked and told stories. Told stories of famous horses, of outlaws, of things that happened down in the Devil's River country, and in the Pecos valley before there were barbed-wire fences in the land. We talked of Captain J. B. Gillet who has written of his six years with the Rangers—of cowboy songs—of Sam Bass—of Clay and his horse Necktie when they broke the roping record at San Angelo, tying a steer in a few seconds—of those who write wild west tales and know nothing of the life they pretend to describe—of Bruce Smith and his book on the State Police—of Graham's wonder when he heard of civilization in Texas, he remembering Sweetwater as nothing but tents and shacks—of the correctness of Bob Davis when he damned a recent writer for making a hard-boiled deputy sheriff talk like a melodramatic matinée actor—of Billy the Kid—of Pat Garrett who killed Billy—of Pat's daughter who gave a song recital in New Mexico which I accompanied—of magazine editors who do not know—of the little cow pony Tejano, and John Lawhead's Black Thunder, and of Deerfoot who kicked two riders to death, and of the cowgirls Tad Barnes and Ruth Roach and Dorothy Morell and Vera McGinnis the stenographer who became a bronc rider. So our hours were full of interest and pleasure

and the only thing I deplored was that Cunninghame Graham and the Major were not with us, for of them we talked, as men will about those they hold in highest esteem. It was all very good and wholesome and invigorating, and I am immensely grateful to the little lady from the Forth Worth paper who brought us together.

The Golden Horseman

O wanderer into many brains,
O spark the emperor's purple hides,
You sow the dusk with fiery grains
When the gold horseman rides.
O beauty on the darkness hurled,
Be it through me you shame the world.

—JOHN MASEFIELD.

ONCE, years ago in England, attending a meeting with a friend, I found myself in a crowd of remarkable men. They had gathered together to protest against the imminent execution of the Chicago anarchists. From my seat on the stage I saw a crowd that packed the aisles, the passages at the rear and the window spaces. Doorways were choked with men who could see but not hear, and stairways were blocked with those who could neither see nor hear. With enthusiasm, speakers told of the coming dawn, voicing the good news desired of men, and we cheered vehemently. We sang too—sang revolutionary songs—the *Ca Ira*, *Carmagnole*, the *Marseillaise* and one wonderful stirring thing written by William Morris to the tune of *Men of Harlech*. So things went very well, and while it is true that it was an idle hour of which nothing came yet in that hour many there lost for the time the dread nightmare that hung over them.

William Morris was on the platform looking for all the world like some grand sea captain in his

loose suit of blue. His daughter, Miss May, was at his side, and Halliday Sparling, student of folklore and Icelandic sagas, on her left. George Bernard Shaw, then unknown as a playwright, but famed as Corni di Bassetto, the music critic, yellow bearded, had H. S. Salt, author of a volume on Thoreau, for his companion, and with them was Walter Crane, artist and decorative illustrator of books. H. G. Wells, too, was there, but he had not then won his spurs as a novelist. Close to him lounged the strange saturnine figure of Lothrop Withington, authority on Elizabethan England and co-worker of Dr. Furnival, the Shakespearean scholar. Stewart Headlam, a clergyman of the Established Church who had been deprived of his "living," as the term has it, was handing about pamphlets on Christian Socialism. Annie Besant, professed atheist, but even then on the verge of an acceptance of theosophy, to which she was finally attracted by a reading of Madam Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*, stood by the piano talking to Prince Kropotkin, the gentle Nihilist who had been inside of both Siberian and French prisons. Even that night Muscovite police shadowed him.

At that meeting things were said which, being said today, would land the speaker in jail. But the people of England and her rulers have ever held fast to a respect for tradition and have preserved a lively sense of the value of individual judgment.

In response to loud and persistent calls there came forward a tall, slim-built man whose self-possession was marked. His well-knit frame told of health. By the cut of his beard he might have been taken for a Spanish grandee. His hair was bushy, with the

luxuriance that often comes of an outdoor life, and the hands that he flung out to quiet the noise were nervous, capable hands, in which one saw strength. Popular though he was with the crowd, it was plain that he shunned fame with more assiduity than many take to cultivate it. As he stood there, saying what he had to say with directness and in plain words, he was an unforgettable figure. My friend, a well-known Positivist leader, leaned over and whispered: "A sound-minded, clear-headed, honest fellow, this Cunninghamham Graham." That was one opinion. I heard Morris express another, following the time, when, at a prohibited meeting, Graham had charged the ranks of the London police in Trafalgar Square and had been not only bludgeoned but arrested and sentenced to imprisonment. Morris said: "Graham is entirely free from the petty souled belief that whatever is respectable is right."

Since that time I have crossed Cunninghamham Graham's trail in many places—in North Africa, the Argentine, Spain, Chili. Here and there I chanced to meet one or two who had known him, and he was always spoken of as men speak of a leader or chief. Quite recently I received from him a late photograph. It shows a man of middle age, whose chief characteristic is alertness, who has that indefinable air of mastery possessed only by horsemen. He stands by a superb animal, the type of creature that would resent being mounted in the climb-and-pull-yourself-up method. The reins are lightly held, and for good reason, for it is plainly to be seen that the beast has been trained without having been broken, and the lightest touch on its neck is understood and obeyed. No useless trappings are to be seen, nor is the tail

docked. All of which is characteristic of Graham, who loves a horse. Horsemanship indeed is a passion with him. He seems to have a peculiar knowledge of and interest in all horse-riding folk, past and present. To give an example of many. In a recent story that appeared in a magazine, I chanced to make mention of a Falkland Island saddle. Graham's next letter asked for particulars and called for a description, which, being received, he wrote, "After all, then your Falkland Island saddle is similar to that used by certain Poles, who are excellent horsemen and have used the *lazo* for generations," and there followed other interesting details.

Now all this means something. To go through the world on horseback is to be raised above the mere pettiness of mankind. The human greatness that men thirst after seems but a small thing to him who rides, and the appetite for glory shows but as a vanity. Yet, mark you, the rider is not too far removed from his fellows. He does not look down upon them scornfully, seeing them as scurrying little things with whose affairs he has no part, as does one who looks on men from the crest of a high hill. The rider is too near his fellows to be indifferent. If in addition to seeing the world leisurely from horseback the man has ridden alone and in far countries, has tasted the joy of solitude in vast places and has known the sting of the wind and the warmth of the sun, has seen the beauty of tossing mane and arched neck and glossy skin, he must of necessity have become imbued with a passionate enthusiasm for liberty.

It is easy, then, to see why there is found in Graham a radical whose radicalism is tempered by a

profound and logical sense of justice. A hatred of shams and a sympathy with those whom Fate has dealt with scurvily permeate his writings. Such is the necessary result of wide personal experience. You see it in Morley Roberts, in Conrad, in Masefield. It explains much of Graham's work. Consider in this light his story of old Betterton, his tale of Firman the kindly anarchist, the unnamed man in Transfigured, or the touching sketch entitled Dutch Smith. Or take his most recent book, a work of exceptional merit, which under the name of A Brazilian Mystic tells of the faith the primitive Sertonejos of Brazil had in Antonio Conselheiro. With a humor that is subtle and delicate and always odd and original there comes a sense of the dignity and worth of a people when striving against oppression and injustice.

It would be difficult to name a writer to whom a man, weary of the noise and stress and strain of modern life and seeking relief and brief respite, could turn as restful as Graham. For myself I find the same sense of rejuvenation when reading him that I find on a quiet summer morning when the air is still and odorous and the early sunlight gilds the tree-tops. A realization of the futility of much that we do comes to me. For so well has Graham wrought that he bears his reader with him. There are no cheap tricks of style. Instead, there is a reproduction of details with unusual fidelity. Read, for example, his *El-Khallaia-Es-Salaa* or his *Sursum Corda*. Again you catch some vivid and interesting picture of life in other lands where customs are not as ours are, notably in *Sor Candida* and *The Bird* and again *Andorra*. Then there are touches of tenderness and

pathos, as in *A Minor Prophet* or in *Elysium*, and common men and women are shown with their hopes and ideals, their aspirations and their strivings. Yet, withal, there is never tawdry illusion nor sentimentality.

And now, if your curiosity has been provoked enough to make you wish to read something of this writer whose reputation is well established in the judgment of the thoughtful, you may find that his books are not on the counters that bear the best sellers, and you may have to ask for them. So for the guidance of the wise his works are *Faith*, *Hope*, *Charity*, *Success*, *Progress*, *His People*, *A Hatchment*, *Thirteen Stories*, *Mogreb el Acksa*. You will find romance in every one of them, for Graham pictures life itself and life itself is romantic.

Hudson and Graham

“**T**HERE was a man,” said Sanchez as he laid little twigs on the new-built fire, “who knew the animals and the birds. He was a gringo, but, unlike them, knew the very snakes, the trees and the things that move under the earth.”

We sat on the banks of the upper Rio Deseado as we talked, Sanchez and I, and it was evening time, and just before the chilliness that made us take our *ponchos* came upon us. The setting sun had flung banners of crimson and gold across the western sky, and above that was a band of that metallic green and blue that you may see on a pigeon's neck feathers. What there may have been beside that I do not know other than that the silhouettes of horses and bushes stood against the sky, and the silver lights were being hung out above one by one. There were soft crunchings as the *tropilla* fed, and, now and then, the ring of the *madrina's* bell.

An armadillo had come into sight and as quickly disappeared, and it was that which had started us to talking of animals. Sanchez held that a *gaucho* was a good horseman, because his soul and the soul of the horse were as one. That all gringos had souls he did not believe. True there might be one here and there—this Hudson of “*circa La Casa Antigua*” was such a one. Then the talk passed to other things and there were tales, and legends, and truths inextricably mixed. There was the story of Angel Brunel, of

the white woman who lived with the Patagonians, of the great green man of the sea, of the spirit who dwelt in the Andes and who sent the *pampera*.

Some time ago I received a long letter from Mr. Hudson, dealing in the main with Patagonian matters. In a sketch of mine, he had found what he thought to be a confirmation of his belief in the sense of location and direction in animals. With the letter was an autographed photograph. That I sent to the framer's. A day or so later, not receiving the picture, I hunted up the man of moldings, who denied having any such treasure as that with which I had entrusted him. Searching around, I found it with a miscellaneous lot of papers, chromos, old books and the rest, where any impious hand might have seized upon it. Chiding him for his carelessness, I found that he had never heard of Hudson, nor did he know of any book written by him. Albeit, the man is also a bookseller. Then said I:

"I'll show you. Where's the History of English Literature that you use in this college?"

"This here's it," said the framer, handing me The History of English Literature by Moody and Lovett.

Searching the index I found no mention of Hudson. I took down another handbook. English and American Literature this time. H. C. Wright had a half page, H. G. Wells a page and a half, Hudson nothing. So the framer was excused.

Now this, remember, is no jay town. It is a college town. It is neither Cluster Springs, Virginia, nor Ash Flat, Sharp county, Arkansas. It is in the proud state of Ohio, mother of presidents, and equidistant from the home of Senator Harding and the state

capitol. Further, locally, there is a good sale for the works of Harold Bell Wright, Dere Mable and Robert Chambers, and the Red Book, Snappy Stories and the Ginger Jar all sell well.

One would think that more people knew of Hudson. Richard Garnett is somebody, and he said that in El Omubu Hudson had written the finest story in the English language. Then there is the late Theodore Roosevelt, who wrote an introduction to the Purple Land. And Galsworthy, too, said this: "Hudson is a very great writer, and, to my thinking, the most valuable our age possesses." Barrie and Clifford Smythe also said fair things about the Crystal Age, while William James thought *Idle Days in Patagonia* was the best book of travel that was ever written.

Well, there's no use repining. Nationally we go in for pinchbeck and tinsel. What we call our opinions are more often than not mere repetitions of the first thing that we heard said on any subject on which we had not thought about before. Deride them as we may, we still look to the newspapers for guidance. Parrot-like, we chatter to each other the wet and dry arguments that are hung in the street cars. Condensed novels we devour, and our geography and history we take from Pathé and Burton Holmes.

The picture rescued from the philistine framer shows a smiling man of late middle age, with gray cropped beard. His left hand is held shoulder high to protect a cigar from the attacks of a pet raven that has perched on his knee. The letter that accompanied the picture has a page closely written telling of the bird, how it approached warily, inquisitively; how it seized upon and tore a page of manuscript;

how it suddenly hopped up and tried to seize the cigar. The description is typical of Hudson's style, being full of an indescribable freshness and enthusiasm. He does not, as did Jack London, project a man's intelligence into an animal. Neither is there anything of the Maeterlinck mysticism in him. Instead, he is more comparable to Fabre.

One recent critic spoke of Hudson as a visionary, and pointed to his *A Little Boy Lost* by way of proving the statement. The critic utterly failed to grasp the significance of that work, and in so failing, missed the salient part of Hudson's purpose. If you will look back a little into your own past, you will find a time in child life when, like Ulysses, you were a part of all you saw, a part of all you heard. It was the hour in which heaven lay about you. Then you knew thrills of delight at little things. A bird hopping before the window, a newly opened flower, a bee on the clover—these were things to be noted and pondered over. Then, to watch an ant was an adventure. Its failure was your grief, its success your delight. Or you found something wonderful and fascinating in the tumbling waves or the murmur of a sea shell. Now that is something of the spirit that animates *A Little Boy Lost*. If you will compare the story with Chapter XVII of his *Far Away and Long Ago* you will see for yourself that this is so. Reading it aloud to the children, there comes to one something like a sense of dismay to find what a great gulf separates the man in his world of fierce rivalry, and hate, and bloodshed, from the child and its world of delight. Reading thus, one is rejuvenated. There is recovered in a measure the days of delight when the fireside was an altar and the

home a place where were no stone walls of separation.

Something of the spirit that impelled Izaak Walton pervades the work of Hudson, as also that of Cunninghame Graham. There is, in all three of them, a realization of the insolubility of life's problems. There is also a lack of personal ambition in so far as that means a desire for the world's goods. And there is, too, a great kindness that embraces all living things. And, withal, there is everywhere expressed a deep and abiding reverence. Finest of all, perhaps, is the poignant sense of pain mingled with love and pity at an act of cruelty. You find the same thing in Dreiser's sketches, especially in his story, *The Sanctuary*. You sense it in Graham's *The Fourth Magus*. It is the kind of feeling a parent has when a child develops a tendency to cruelty or to acts of meanness.

You catch too, a peculiar note of half mystical veneration at times. A dozen passages might be cited of this nature from *Far Away and Long Ago*, but especially so the story of the old *gaucho* land owner. In Graham you find the same thing in his *Sor Candida* and the *Bird*. Unostentatious piety is the keynote. Passing from the priests' and nuns of Hudson and Graham to those depicted by George Moore in his *Story-Teller's Holiday* is like stepping from a quiet family fireside into a brothel. It is as if you had passed from the companionship of Shelley and Pater to herd with Yahoos and Struldbrugs.

Reading the tales of the pampas by both men, you will not fail to be struck with the absence of laughter. Looking back, it seems to me that on the pampas there was a quiet joy, a satisfaction, a content such

as we may suppose animals feel. Out under the sky, I do not think that we laughed much—we who wandered far. Neither did the Indians. There were smiles to be sure, but rarely laughter. Nature in fact, does not laugh. Laughter is an extreme, like violent grief. It is a reaction, a protest perhaps against the grayness and dullness and commonness of civilized life. It is more of an anodyne to mitigate the pain of a silly existence. If you doubt that, go to a moving picture show and watch the people that laugh. More often than not you will find that laughter comes at the discomfiture of others. Perhaps that is one reason why the tales of Hudson and Graham will never attain popularity. Certainly folk whose risibilities are stirred by the Bolshevistic activities of Everett True, or the brickbating of Jeff by Mutt, will never find delight in Hudson's Story of a Picbald Horse, or Graham's Andorra.

"But," people say, "these writers leave the reader in the air. What becomes of so and so?" The question voices a complaint, the common complaint of people who are obsessed with the false notion that in life everything is cut and dried, symmetrical and reasonable. Such people revolt against any presentation of life as it really is—that is, anarchical meaningless, objectiveless. Their ideal in a story is a struggle for the satisfaction of an appetite—the sexual appetite. If the Hungry Two are led by devious ways to the banquet chamber and the curtain falls as they are about to take their seat at the feast, so to speak, all's well. If not, all's wrong. Now both Hudson and Graham are as little concerned with sex appetite as with any other appetite. They are wisely content to present truth as it appears to them, and are not con-

cerned to elucidate for the reader. The past and the future are left to take care of themselves. If a situation is paradoxical, it is so, and there's an end to it. Lesser minds may attempt reconciliation? They do not find it necessary.

There is another thing. You may search the writings of Hudson, as you may search those of Graham, without finding a single gilded hero. Heroic deeds are done to be sure, but, as it is in life, extraordinary things are done in a matter-of-fact way by very ordinary men. Men do not strike attitudes in life when they are in earnest, any more than, outside of moving picture land, they are forever grasping one another's hands or slapping each other on the back. In real life there are no *Cyrano de Bergeracs*. Pershings do not gather at tombs saying, "Here we are, Lafayette," or "We are here, Lafayette," either. Explorers do not stand on Darien peaks and make magniloquent speeches to the ocean. When things are accomplished, they are accomplished so gradually that no surprise is felt at the end, nor is there any particular thrill. The Wright brothers, judging by what I saw of them at Dayton, probably "took a chew" at the close of their first successful flight. Conrad doubtlessly went to bed like a sensible man when he had finished *Nostromo*. Nor could Columbus have felt any particular rapture when he saw the gray blob that marked Cat Island and the end of his trip. So in these stories of the pampas you will find no Douglas Fairbanks. You will find deeds of violence told of, and tales of strife and of anguish, but nothing of the theatrical in the presentation. If a throat is to be cut, it is cut quietly, quickly, and without ostentation, as in life. There may be a little

preliminary argument and brag, for that is both human and animal like. But the real business is done expeditiously and there's an end on 't. I think that is all I have to say.

A Brace of Friends

HAVING read in the Century magazine, a paragraph by W. H. Hudson in which he gave me what Bernard Raymund called a "friendly pat on the back" because of the story *My Friend Julio*, I hastened to write the letter I owed the naturalist, to be halted by news of his death. Mine then was the sting of bereavement, for his letters, full of inexhaustible wit and never-failing manly good sense, were as bright suns to me. A precious thing indeed was that correspondence, and on a letter Hudson must have bestowed the same care that he did on a chapter in a book. What that meant readers of his *Green Mansions* will best know. For Hudson was always charming, never slovenly, never extravagant.

Like Richard Jeffries, or Wilfred Scawen Blunt, Hudson was no lover of our modern civilization. "Long years of decadence," he styled our times. Yet he was no whining pessimist, no surly grouch. He was one of those rare souls who can, in perfect sweetness, withdraw from the noise and confusion. The Aurelian desire to be a center of order in a scene of disorder was strong within him. For schemes of social reform, for up-lifting, for the institutional salvation of the race he cared no more than did Thoreau. But he deplored most strongly, the national lack of dignity, the widespread tendency to selfishness and vulgarity, and he found to be a dangerous thing likely to destroy the fibre of a people, the con-

fessed desire to "have a good time." For his was the Aristotelean belief that the cult of pleasure for its own sake was a vivid evil.

Such men naturally cleave to the quiet places, the uninvaded spots. They must have solitude, and to them the state is a kind of household but so well ordered a one that a man can withdraw into complete privacy to the end that he may gain his own soul.

Wilfred Scawen Blunt also died recently. There, by Heaven, was a man with a backbone! His impatience with pretense, all forms of bunk and insincerity and intellectual cowardice made him stand out as a most striking personality. If you will but read the two volumes of his Diaries, you will sense the truly upright man in its pages. Praise could not turn him nor blame discourage. I think of him as the kind of being pictured by Ezra Pound in that most glorious Ballade of the Goodly Fere. God must be glad to greet such a man.

Because he dared to criticize England and to chasten her rulers, the gratitude of thoughtful men in England to him is just and deep. Blunt was a Hereward and a Ulysses, and when the body of such a one is laid in the earth, the ears of the gods should be pierced with the rolling of glorious drums and the sound of silver trumpets.

I received a letter from R. B. Cunninghame Graham, and think it proper to share a passage with the readers. Here it is:

"Hudson is a great loss. He wrote me on July 31st,

saying that he had been staying with Blunt, who, he said, was in a bad way. Now both are gone; they were both 82, both were men of genius and both were six feet high and very handsome, but neither was very robust. Blunt, poor fellow, suffered greatly for years and his death was a relief from pain. Hudson was a giant in strength and stature; Blunt had a weak heart all his life. Hudson gave an impression of ripe old age and was content, alert and active. Blunt in later years was very infirm and only kept alive by careful nursing. He was a very rich man.

"Hudson never had a cent until the last ten years of his life, when money began to flow in, and he was quite comfortable. Indeed, for a man of his simple habits he was rich. A great writer indeed and a man of the keenest sensibilities. Blunt was a man of genius, very high minded but keenly aware of the sting of opposition. Hudson, too, felt the neglect of the world but he was never bitter, though sometimes gently sarcastic.

"They were a fine pair. I made them known to each other and it was curious to see the friendship that sprung up between the ornithologist and the man of fashion, birth, wealth and position. Genius was the link as it would have been between Burns and Byron had fate allowed them to meet.

"Blunt lived in the most charming old Jacobean house set in the midst of great woods, and had 90 or more Arab horses going about like sheep. There, there was always room for Hudson,"

Major Maddox

MY friend, a man erect and brown, clear-eyed and active, a fellow of gentlemanly good sense, ran his car down to Gayeta Lodge one Sunday, became acquainted with the family, took a hand at tennis and billiards, walked about the place with me and admired my sheep and dogs and horses, looked at the books and pictures, was properly attentive when Kittie and I played Mozart, spoke with lively inspiration of the baked ham that Mrs. F. prepared, put on the gloves for a round or two with Chas. Jr., rode a while with Hubert across country, played a game of chess with Margaret, revealed the fact that he had read and inwardly digested both *Highwaymen* and *In Lawless Lands*, danced a waltz with Helen, compared notes with Baerg on poisonous spiders, delighted Eric by teaching the Airedale a new trick, and then, at supper, secure in the knowledge that he had made a kind of tactical victory, sprung a surprise with sufficient ingenuity by saying to the assembled board that he had to take a trip across to New York in his car and greatly desired that I should share his joy. Further he enlisted the sympathy of all by saying that he could not endure to travel alone, and much desired a companion of quick apprehension, lively interest and eager sympathy,—all with an eye bent on me. Next, he made of himself a kind of infallible authority, and declared that a man who wrote too long and continuously

must needs suffer from shattered nerves, and indigestion, and foot and mouth disease, and liver complaint, and myopia, and Bright's disease, not to mention moral invalidism. Finally massing his guns, as it were, he painted the glories of rare country lanes, of vast views that burst suddenly as the car tops a rise, of the gorgeous and fantastic coloring of sunset woods, of pine-clad hills seen from a distance, of Shaw's Saint Joan and The Miracle and a possible sight of the marvelous adventurers who operate outside the twelve-mile limit, and much more. For a while I sat like a stoical Roman Emperor thrice refusing the crown, then, at the end, I knelt down and kissed the soil of my orchard, saluted the locust tree thick with bloom, instructed my sons in the immediate business of husbandry and the sheepfold, commended myself to the Saints, and hardened my heart to the toil, the endurance and the discipline of the journey.

David Cox

GUION'S name was mentioned a little while. And that reminds me. So careless and good of conceit are some men, musicians and artists, literary people especially, that they never at that people in other walks of life may have an amateur knowledge of subjects as great, or greater, than that of the professional. Look, for instance, Luther Brewer who does fine printing. He is a specialist on Leigh Hunt and his works; knows more about that Philadelphian Englishman than any living authority, wherefore he knows, also, much about Keats and Shelley and Byron, as well as the political condition of England at the time of the publication of the Examiner which landed Hunt in jail. Any professor of literature would find himself treed, venturing upon an argument about Hunt, with Luther Brewer. Yet, I have been told, it is a kind of frailty in Brewer to pretend in conversation that he is a mere surface skimmer, but that's only the modesty of the scholar. I know, too, that Henry Ford is an expert on methods of transportation and has a fad for allied subjects, so that he can tell you offhand when the sedan chair came into use, or when the one-horse chaise passed out, or when Niepce invented the velocipede. And once I knew a railroad man in the auditing department, Mr. Loomis now of Chicago, who discovered a rare knowledge of literature and of the science of political economy; also an official of

the Galena Oil Company, who had a penchant for numismatics; and there lives in Little Rock a lawyer who is a collector of art treasures whose very office is a place of delight for the appreciative.

But back to my reminiscence. Down south, the other day, I fell into talk with a man who turned out to be a professor of the piano, and as was natural, we fell to discussing modern tendencies in music, he unsuspecting my interest in the art, which was well. But what was not at all well was that my acquaintance, quite blandly and as if with authority, assured me that Guion's music was "thin" and "unoriginal" and "lacking depth," and much more. What was worse, he went on to tell me that Guion would have been unknown, had not Percy Grainger, chancing to step into Schirmer's place, seen some rejected manuscripts, whereupon he spoke of Guion as a possibility worth considering, whereupon Schirmer captured Guion. Which is all nonsense, as Miss Nannine Joseph can testify; others, too, for Guion's Spirituals, I think, were published by Witmark with gladness and Nannine Joseph was his strong supporter. And there is Dr. Sonneck, too, who is a man with vast knowledge. However, that's all a detail.

What is not unimportant is that Guion, without doubt, stands as the original setter forth of American life in music. Take his recently published *Alley Tunes*. The three scenes in the collection are as characteristic as Beethoven's opus 81, with its *Adieu*, its *Picturization of Absence* and its joyousness at the Return. They are as strongly descriptive as Gounod's *Funeral March of a Marionette*, or as Schumann's *Northern Song*, or as the same composer's *Hobby Horse*, or as Schubert's *Erl-king*, or as Cohen's

trumpet-like Over there. You have the negro preacher and his flock; the man hortatory, his congregation responsive, the house joining in a strongly rhythmic spiritual. It is as vivid a piece of writing as ever came out of America, *if you can play it, and if you know the negro*. But in that knowledge, that very necessary knowledge, lies the rub. The player whose notion of the negro and his ways is based upon pitiable vaudeville stage stuff, or upon the comic strips in the Sunday papers, will be all at sea. So also will be those attempting to play knowing only the city negro who apes the manners and customs and costume of the white man. But to hear David Guion play the number is a revelation. He reproduces the sensations in his hearer which are felt in the presence of the unspoiled negro in a negro church; the fellow splendid in his superstition, most strenuous in his emphasis, monotonously chanting, desperately persuading and urging and scolding, alternately grotesque and serious in a way to make an indelible impression on the imagination. And there's the other side, the childlike side of the negro, all very admirably portrayed in the piece representing the lonesome whistler whistling to keep up his courage while he passes a graveyard. The thing has no counterpart in the literature of music. The scared fellow suffers an exquisite martyrdom, and hides his fear under the slimmest of disguises; at the last actually reveals his fear and nervousness. To get the full flavor of it all, the other piece, The Harmonica-Player, should follow. The thin, jerky music of the toy instrument is excellently imitated. The atmosphere is one of vivacity and nimbleness. It is all robustiousness and angularity. It is all rude and stark,

like a sailor chantie. Guion was never fresher nor more subtle than in this, and I had as much genuine pleasure hearing him play the series of three, as I had when listening to Paderewski play Bach's Fantasia Chromatique.

I do not denounce my professor of the piano for his opinion so adverse to mine. What I say is that he did not understand, could not understand because he was limited in experience, and never would understand because he was a narrow man and his horizon would always be narrow.

David Guion has set some rare old songs to music: Shout yo' Glory; Little Pickaninny Kid; De Ol' Ark's a-Moverin'; The Greatest Miracle of All, all of which have the true tang.

Then there's Guion and the plainsmen, with his The Bold Vaquero, which Clark of Canyon sung as we rode south of Amarillo. And Clark sings with his body and heart and soul, not caricaturing at all, but getting along with galloping splendor, ripping out his chorus with suddenest vivacity, entirely giving himself to the thing in hand. He scores by sheer enthusiasm. But then Clark of Canyon knows the cowboy, as also does Guion. And the words run as merrily as the music.

It is the kind of thing that Eugene Lockhart would get a tremendous amount of fun out of.

But Guion is equally excellent in that which calls for religious emotion, not falling into the gloomy-sentimental or the stuffy, but somehow indicating a joyful and generous hope, such as a man may feel after the morning meal, or when reading a noble-minded book. I indicate his Prayer, a setting for a little song by Hagedorn, but before that his Praise

God I'm Satisfied, which is based on a Negro spiritual. His Resurrection is another fine conception. And for the robust, in another direction, there is his Sail Away for the Rio Grande, a sea chantie I heard on the Chilean coast.

We are not in the Stone Age, musically speaking. That's important to remember. I have been carrying a banner for Guion and for Andrew Haigh, both composers as well as concert pianists, but there are others, not mere jazz vulgarists, but musicians who reflect the spirit of America. They are not afraid of jazz, you understand. Jazz is musical slang, well enough in its place, amusing and vigorous, comparable to certain styles in literature, or phases rather than styles; say Kipling's Barrack Room Ballads, or George Ade's Fables in Slang, or Peter Finley Dunne's Mr. Dooley, or Anita Loos' little book. But that is not the stuff to live very long, and certainly not the stuff to delight successive generations of listeners to music. It is like any kind of abnormal idiom in literature, and the history of literature is fairly instructive on the subject of what lives and what does not. You have but to go back to the songs of Pierce Egan, or the clever slang stuff of Henley, or the forced humor of Lever, or Lover, or even some of Dickens, or of Petroleum V. Nasby to realize how soon jargon fades.

Stuart P. Sherman

STUART SHERMAN struck me as being the sort of man to make a first class out-of-door companion; not an adventurer in the ordinary sense of the word, but a kind of Richard Jeffries who would find real delight in the pleasant spaces of wood and mountain. Perhaps I thought thus because his black and glossy hair and his dark eyes reminded me of that traveling partner of whom I wrote on another page. Perhaps because of a certain zest when he looked at some Field landscapes. Perhaps because of a good-natured tolerance when we discussed things. Perhaps because of a quiet meditative air about him. We had a good talk, oddly truncated when someone butted in.

I count Sherman as a very perfect exponent of his age. For say what you will, object as you may, fight against it as you choose, there is not the slightest shadow of doubt that American life and American literature are rooted in a moral sub-soil. That is a fact there is no getting away from. Also the Sherman insistence that tradition is not a hampering bond, but a school of mood and manners, is thoroughly sound. For Sherman is not for any rigid classicism, though some have considered him to be. What he stands for, in a word, is for certain fullness of association and an intimate connection with the past, and that must of necessity prove suggestive to the literary artist.

Consider Sherman's magazine, Books, the literary section of the New York Herald Tribune. What do you find in it? This. A foundation of common-sense. A balanced judgment. A refusal to strike an attitude of repressive despotism—also a refusal to acquiesce in a lawless defiance of tradition. Not wildly this way, nor wildly that way. Neither lethargy nor rebellion. Neither spectacular iconoclasm nor hostility to what is new.

Ozarcadia

THERE lies, a little to the west of Gayeta, a house, roomy enough, which its owners call a cottage. It is one of those homes which, when passing in an auto, you naturally slacken your pace to look at. It stands far back from the road and has a sloping lawn with great stretching oaks; and the chimney is ivy-covered, and there are climbing roses which look in at square-paned windows; and the scent of honeysuckle is in the air, and flashing cardinals make a tuneful note, and in fields beyond you have a glimpse of cows; and if you are lucky and inquisitive, as you turn going to Farmington, you may catch sight of a pleasant kitchen with shining tins and china, for most doors are wide open in May.

The cottage is called Ozarcadia and the Spragues live there. For years they have toured the country, presenting plays, and I cannot recall any one of their two-months-rests between circuits, when we have not had some kind of sociable affair, the Spragues either coming to Gayeta, or Gayeta going to the Spragues. And there's a kind of friendly rivalry in entertainment, for both Herbert Sprague and I are Tom Sawyers or Thomas Sandys, liking to do things up in style and entertain in the grand manner.

This time it was Sprague's surprise, and well he handled it. Our family drove over to Ozarcadia to supper, but Charles Jr., and I, having to see to the two thousand chickens, and the sheep, and one thing

and another, did not get there until eight, by which time the moon was high and bright. Some of us sat on the porch, from which we could see a great oak, and beyond that the hills, a little ghostly in the moonlight. It is the kind of landscape into which you transfer yourself as you look, dreaming adventures. And, lo, and behold, as we looked, we heard a strange voice, a rusty and creaky old voice, and presently there came into sight an ancient figure dressed in brown. It was an old man, and he carried a long-barreled gun, and he walked slowly talking as he went. Then another strange sight, for out of the bushes there came dwarfs and gnomes, creatures incredibly small, bearded and hatted. Through the moonlight dimness we saw them and the illusion was perfect. There was all the business of Rip Van Winkle with the keg of schnapps, his mixed fear and friendliness concerning the little people, his drinking the strange potion, his falling senseless, and we were chance and secret on-lookers hidden in the wood, seeing those things by sheer accident. We did not remember that the chief character was Herbert Sprague, nor that the gnomes were Ann and Helen and Herbert, nor that the spirit of Henry Hudson was Mrs. Sprague. In such natural surroundings, with nothing artificial, the illusion becomes perfect. The critical faculty becomes dead. So it was a happy piece of business from beginning to end—the spectators merging into the play, a very part of the play—the players making a genuine study and interpretation. And Sprague's unhesitating certainty of execution! It always leaves me marveling.

Munsey's Right Hand

THERE was Bob Davis. Do you know him? Or do you think of him merely as the skipper who has watched the destinies of the Munsey publications? If you are of a sort to see beyond the surface, you may know the man from his surroundings as you may know a ship's officer from his cabin furnishings. In his office there are things treasured, not cluttering the place in the style of a junk shop, but in order—a horseshoe forged by Bob Fitzsimmons—a bronze of a pair of brutalized prize-fighters (which I secretly coveted)—a book finely inscribed—a picture—a drawer filled with letters from no one knows how many men who have found a friend in him. But nothing at all is there, brought by him from those foreign countries which he has visited. All those have been given away. He would not keep such things. Not he. Generosity, you see—that's the man's keynote. And that generosity comes from his gift of friendship.

As for reminiscent conversation, I could sit and listen to him all day, though, mark you, you cannot often get him off his guard so that he will talk of the past. His face is set to the future. So again he is like a skipper who has set his course. A buoyant companion, this Bob Davis; one never at the mercy of moods, if I am any judge of men.

Carl Van Doren

NOW it being a habit of mine to glance in at the windows of houses, though not in any Paul Pry fashion, and especially into basement windows because of occasional glimpses of pleasant home life, what should I see in one room but a tallish man with tortoise-shell spectacles standing up to read a new book, nipping the while another new book beneath what the Scotch call the oter. It took no more than two paces for things to connect themselves in my mind. "Carl Van Doren," said I to myself, so whipped round, took the four white stone steps at a leap, smote the door with the brass knocker and then gathered my thoughts. At the alarm a stout, colored woman came, who, on learning my business said that she would see whether my man was at home. I pointed out to her that both his hat and coat were in the hall, and that he was no erratic minded one to go abroad on a March day unclad for storms, at which Sherlockism she seemed startled.

In a minute more I was in the basement workshop, a place as bookishly pleasant as the upper chamber in which my friend lived. A little fire was in the grate. There were bookshelves well filled, a scholar's order about them. A red crayon sketch of Irita Van Doren hung over the mantel, a very handsome piece of work done in spirited fashion. On the mantelshelf were pipes, tobacco and matches; also a triple photograph holder containing the pictures of those three

girls written about so pleasantly in the book, *Other Provinces*—the which you should read if you would be familiar with the best of latter-day writing in the way of subtle character sketching. And because of that last, our talk fell upon children and their reading and their imaginative games, I telling of the youngsters in the mountains at Gayeta, with their Robin Hood, and their Hollow tree, and their puppet theater, and their dramatization of Scott's *Rob Roy*; Van Doren telling of his three who were happy in the *Three Musketeers* world, and a very gallant world it is. After I had left the house and while I rode in the subway I was full of regret that I had not seen the three girls, because I wanted to tell of a fine, slim-bladed, brass-hilted sword of old Spanish make which Hubert brought home one day, a beautiful weapon which had been lost in the Ozarks by some old adventurer and which now hangs over the dining-room door.

Speaking of Men

AND while on the subject of men, there are two others who come to mind, both of whom were week-end visitors at Gayeta. One was Cecil Roberts, the English novelist; the other my friend, the student-critic, John Cowper Powys. Roberts stands the best chance of taking the reading world by storm, some day; Powys is too shy and retiring for that. Certainly, to read Powys' critical essays is a little like reading Dr. Johnson because of his stateliness. But in the flesh Powys is a retiring scholar, always gentle; fitter for the life of a recluse than for the platform; made for the cloister, indeed. He is no man for the rough and tumble of life. I was reminded of some gentle-hearted woman, seeing him full of ecstasy at the sight of a week-old, fluffy little chick. He took it in his hands with infinite gentleness, lifted it to his cheek, held it there a while, whispering. "You sweet, funny little thing. You sweet, funny little thing!" I have never experienced such ecstasy as that. It was real with him. The feel of the chick seemed to have awakened a sleeping sense of delight in him. Presently he put it down near the hen, and stood a long while, watching it. Nor did he say anything further until we were in the woods. But arrived, he stood taking in the beauty of tree and moss and fern and early flower, and I am sure that he was full of love for them. I am sure that his sensitive nature knew of things of which I was ignorant. I am

sure that he was full of reverence and awe, entering simply and freely into the life about him. A curious radiance and brightness seemed to come over him. That is as truthfully as I can put things. I imagine him extremely sensitive to nature, to art, to literature. I am sure that he is a lonely man among men—lonely as Lincoln. But the pantheist soul is in him and with nature that loneliness falls away.

Cecil Roberts, on the other hand, is fitted to sway opinion, to take an active part in life, to fight for an ambition. He might be an Arthur Balfour, deep thought breaking out in impassioned and vehement eloquence. I predict that he will pass through the literary stage to achieve the political. There is just that daring about him. "They say," he remarked to President Coolidge, "they say that you were weaned on a dill pickle," and, I have been told, the astonishing attack broke down the Presidential reserve and he talked to Roberts for three hours on end, dropping the official to become the man. As critic Roberts' work is balanced and rational. As novelist I know nothing of him, but have his latest book, *Little Miss Mannington*, set aside for reading. So more about him later. I assure you that he was a fine guest over Saturday and Sunday, though not such a favorite with the women as was Powys.

More of Them

IT was good to meet those two book lovers, Richard Laukhuff and Leonard Smith. We discussed Van Vechten's *Peter Whiffle*, Leo Duran's very bloody *Plays of Old Japan*, and Ludwig Lewisohn's *Up Stream*, and from them drifted by way of Flaubert into a discussion of books of an erotic nature, finally landing on "*Hands Across*." Then, turning sharply, we passed via Anatole France to Ezra Pound and I, with some pride poorly concealed, told of a recent letter received in which he was gracious enough to tell me that I was not an "imbecile," which, I suppose, is as far as he ever goes in the way of praise. . . . By the way, Laukhuff is the extraordinary man of whom Carl Sandburg wrote, the man who refuses to sell or handle books which do not come up to his standard of what a book should be. Moreover, when he finds a book particularly pleasing, he is very apt to place it on a shelf somewhere, and, while you vainly try to purchase, tell you that it is too good to sell. That he did with a copy of Pound's *Umbra* and also with the first edition of Mencken's *American Language*. On the other hand, he will work his head off to push a good book, and sold no less than a hundred copies of Blunt's *Diaries* in spite of the steep price. He is a rebel bookseller. Let a salesman walk patronizingly into his shop in the Taylor Arcade and offer a fine line of modern novels and there will be some difficulty to quell the out-

break. To hear him denounce the prevailing vacuity of fiction, is like watching Niagara . . . Leonard Smith is a different type. He is a profound critic of literature who will read all things, holding fast to that which he finds good, and, having read, will sum up tersely both book and writer. He would make a fine understudy of Kenelm Digby and, if Cleveland papers so weak in their literary columns had but half an eye to business, they would have picked him up long ago. I chanced to mention Cabell's Chivalry, Smith summed up the work swiftly and concretely as possessing "the subtle qualities of unity and vigor" which seemed to me very appropriate. Again, we talked of Bjorkman's *The Soul of a Child*. Said Smith, "Bjorkman is absolutely lucid, his knowledge of detail is wonderful, he is picturesque and unfailingly interesting," and what more could be said in truth?

William Feather talked charmingly about business. Feather is a handsome young man who has built up a great industry in a few years of hard work, and he has an air of victory about him. He published a book not so long ago entitled, *As We Were Saying*, and his theme is that plain industry is more important than cleverness. He edits many company magazines and is all for eliminating muddleheadedness, sentimentality and the ancient platitudes. I could well imagine the eye of agonized aversion that Oscar Wilde would have turned on him, and in his company, Martin Farquhar Tupper would have lost his mental balance. On the other hand, Nietzsche, Shaw, Haldeman-Julius or Mencken would get along with him famously.

"What distresses us, hampers us nationally," he

said, "is the muddle, the futility, the lack of clean-cut ideas in those who aim to be our leaders." "The real man, he who goes forward, is the man who provides the timely stimulus, the apt suggestion at the fortunate moment. He welds the inefficient mass, becomes leader, builder, boss." Feather's plan, in a word, is to interest executives in the catching of bold, clear ideas as they formulate in the minds of employees to the end that the man on the payroll shall not be a mere puppet whose interest ceases when the whistle blows. He holds that civilization is a matter of prevailing ideas and that what is needed is a culture of fine, creative minds. And that, you may observe, is a notion just now occupying the minds of men. Ever increasingly it becomes clear that muddle and disorder are not ended by transferring power from one planless party to another equally planless, or by referring matters of import to committees, or by delegating authority to those who seek to assume it for their own ulterior motives. But above all, he seeks to put an end to the steady andante of pessimism.

Stuart Olivier

I PAID a visit to my friend, Stuart Olivier, a man well enough known in New York to the literary crowd, who recently bought the Springfield Leader, paying some three quarters of a million dollars for the property. A remarkable man, this. One who never confuses notoriety with fame. One who cares nothing for cheap popular applause. A man of sincerity of purpose. A critic in the highest sense of that term. A journalist who believes that an editorial should be the result of serious reasoning. A man without timidity.

A. B. Calder

A MAN came from a great distance to spend a little time at Gayeta, and a livelier fellow never played a knife and fork at our table. He is a Canadian, one known from Heath Point, Anticosti, to Demarcation Point in Yukon, and from Windsor, Ontario, to the loneliest igloo on King Christian island; his name A. B. Calder, and his address the Canadian Pacific Railway. Battered and sore after a walk up the mountain to the Labyrinth, through a tangle of primitive forest, over rocky roads and along winding paths, skipping streams and picking a way over stepping stones, he was still sweet-tempered. At the table he had everyone roaring with laughter at his quips and funny tales. And away from the table he had the boys delighted with mild Rabelaisian stories with a tang to them. He won the hearts of the children with his interest. He delighted Mrs. F. with his talk of the Canadian birds' songs, and his description of the spring woods way up north on the Mississini river where the world is a tangle of creeks and lakes. As for me, I was safely and soon caught, what with his knowledge of horses and dogs and sheep; and especially with his conversation about literature, he not making a monologue of it in the abominable style of what are called conversationalists who go after their subject in a hierarchal kind of way, but playing the game square so that what he said was frank communication. And A. B. C. knows his litera-

ture, is the happy sort to sweep over mountains of books and select the worth-while, can sagely and sanely appraise, is genial in his criticisms, is not afraid of a flash of humor, can distinguish between moods and character. And he is loyal to his friends. And his tales of travel are not boastfulnesses, but are in a spirit of "This world is mine to see and to enjoy." So you have some notion of the man he is.

A Visitor

A MAN who said that he was walking from St. Louis to California came to my place one evening just as I had finished butchering a steer and was admiring the sunset. He was a likable fellow, not at all boresome and seemed eager to talk of the world in general, so we sat up until early in the morning.

There were many things discussed and he was very much taken with a book that he had read called, *Indelible*, by Eliot H. Paul and told me of Rolyston Markham with his *Pete's Pelican* and the crowd in New Orleans who run the *Double Dealer*. Then we came to the "columnists" in New York and he said that they had acquired a reputation more because of their ability to show off rather than because of the value of their independent judgment. He held that they had a power of ingenious repartee but had unfortunately fallen into a childish and evil habit of mutual admiration and excessive partizanship which might pass if they strove to avoid the appearance of capriciousness and if they transferred themselves from the plane of prejudice to the plane of fairness. He gave an instance in which Heywood Broun had spoken flippantly of the Haldeman-Julius booklets. That woke me up for it has seemed to me that Julius is doing a very wonderful thing and I said that what Broun or anyone else said did not matter so very much seeing that the proof of the pudding was in the eating, and that some three hundred thousand of the little booklets are sold every week.

However, what with finding his company pleasant and our talk falling on the Julius matter, I walked with the man to town, and, on the impulse bought a ticket to Girard, Kansas, and so came to pass a pleasant day, for, arriving there, I found a little party of five seated for no particular reason in a rough semi-circle on the grass in the shade of the Haldeman-Julius house. *Place aux dames*, there was Mrs. H-J, that beautiful mixture of age nineteen and a grave woman, hostess all alert, the kind of woman to whom straight young men confide their love affairs. Julius himself was sitting a little apart with that air of his of lying in wait, sometimes catching at conversational ends, giving them a tug and so bringing to light unsuspected possibilities. Then there was an earnest young college professor who teaches literature and has decided views on modern poetry. Though quite shy and retiring he could talk about Marjorie Mecker, Glenn Ward Dresbach, Whitelaw Saunders or Helene Mullins as easily as he could talk of and quote from George Sterling, Amy Lowell, Margaret Widdemer, H. D., Ezra Pound, Carl Sandburg or Robert Frost. Dropping his reserve, he kept a half dozen names in the air as a juggler keeps up a revolving circle of oranges. Then there was a queer fish picked up by Haldeman-Julius in a coal field. He was odd about the hair and wild of eye and there was an air of subdued expectancy about him. He talked explosively of men and books, asked questions and at times made holes in the conversation by saying disconcerting things and Jack Erasmus was his glorious name. Upton Sinclair was there too, quite at ease in spite of the fact that his shirt was torn from a point at the lowest

cervical vertebra to the upper lumbar ditto. It seemed an odd fashion in which to rend a garment for ventilation but you can never tell what a literary man will do. Even William Morris, most ordinary of men was not guiltless of certain indiscretions in the way of purple trousers in his younger and pre-Raphaelite days, and, as all the world knows, Baudelaire had the habit of dyeing his hair and eyebrows a vivid green. Sinclair seems too sane to indulge in eccentricities but for all that in the back of my mind was a wonder whether the rent was deliberate or adventitious.

Upton Sinclair was reminiscent on the subject of his travels in England. He was decidedly illuminating, though, privately, I deplored his habit of classifying men into two opposing camps; on the one hand those who comprehended what he called revolutionary economics and on the other those who cared nothing for them. With Sinclair you are either irretrievably damned or not, just as you disbelieve or believe in the theory of socialism. For those who have strayed from the faith there are pitiless sarcasms.

Marjorie Meeker

IN a tall-windowed, oak-fitted room, warmed with the afternoon sunlight and faintly redolent, I think, of early roses, I met Marjorie Meeker, now Mrs. Wing. She had very recently returned from Paris. As we talked of James Joyce and Ezra Pound, for sooner or later all real conversation on literary subjects pivots on Pound, I became aware of a stream of mental activity flowing in the Hinterland of my mind. I had a curious recurrent feeling that something like what was unfolding had happened before, and it held me perplexed. Everything was strangely familiar. Even the natural pose of the young lady as she sat, elbow upon crossed knee and chin on knuckle, recalled something. So the other me was very busy reviewing: the generous portico, the large reception hall, the fire brightly blazing, the wide stairway down which, graceful as a child and radiating welcome, had come Miss Marjorie. Of a sudden things rushed together and I remembered a visit once made at the home of Wilfred Blunt, and other stately homes in England, and bright-faced young women with fine keen minds. So I was no longer puzzled. Here was the old English tradition: the girls of the house bright and daring and armed with complete self-possession, quite free of superficiality and glitter, very natural and frank. I looked at her sister who stood by the piano fluttering the pages of some new music, and was confirmed in my notion. The same straight-seeing

eyes, the same poise, the same clear-cut personality. In both was the voice all music, in both a manifest decision of character, and above all, there were serenity and sincerity. At every gesture, every attitude, I seemed to recognize English girls.

On recent poetry, Miss Marjorie spoke with fluent enthusiasm and understanding. With fine directness she sketched out her preferences. Carl Sandburg impressed her as a man of immense earnestness, a seer or a prophet. Edna Vincent Millay was the queen of lyricists. There was the admiration of an intelligent craftswoman for the work of Elliot, of Flint, of Carlos Williams. I agreed heartily with her in an expressed dislike for the work of Cummings. We spoke of the strange, flinty aphorisms of Pound. On each and every subject there were very definite attitudes and conclusions: never hedging nor pretense. This amazing young lady with the bright, clear complexion and searching blue-gray eyes is keenly aware of things, keenly appreciative and her heart is in her work. But for all her self-depreciation, her too harsh criticism of her own work, I hold that we may confidently expect something of permanent value. You have, doubtless, seen her work in this paper as well as in Poetry, North American Review and other magazines. The form is always dainty and finished, sometimes pathetic but not tragic. It ever expresses the indefinable air of culture and good breeding, and accomplishes its end with apparent ease and indifference. But for all that there is sincere effort and hard work and a hundred efforts are hidden for one that sees the light.

John Gould Fletcher

AS I stepped out of my office the other day, I saw, coming across the little bridge which spans the stream, a tallish and slim-built man dressed in gray, who walked with the hurried stride of a city man, the sort of stride I once cultivated, which was born, in my case, of a desire to get ahead of the man in front and thus win at ticket office or barber chair. My office being pleasant with the January sunshine, I waited on the steps, fearing a little that my visitor might be a collector, or an agent, whereupon I could plead pressure of work. But I was pleasantly surprised, for the man held out his hand in greeting, then gave mine a hearty shake, and proclaimed himself to be John Gould Fletcher who had come, on one of my general invitations, to spend the week-end with me.

"Good Lord!" was all that I was able to say for a moment, not addressing him, but because not so long before I had written a letter to him and he in London, imagining that the poet from Little Rock had expatriated himself from these states forever.

So we went into the office and he made himself comfortable, his feet resting on my stove top until, at an inadvertent move he brought stove and piping down, for the stove's leg is tricky for those who do not know. But he was not concerned at the accident, and went on talking as he helped me readjust the thing—talking about those we both knew, Cunningham Graham, and Masfield, and members of the Fabian Society, and W. H. Davis, and Ernest Boyd,

and Harriet Monroe, and Lindsey, and Edgar Lee Masters, and Powys. What especially pleased me was his very direct expression of prejudices and reverse. He either liked or he disliked, nor was there any lukewarmness about anyone mentioned. Nor, be it said, when we compared notes, did our likes and dislikes coincide.

The pleasantest thing about his visit was one evening when the fire burned brightly and all of us were gathered in the library, the lamps and candles lit, and the Christmas tree dancing and glittering with its thousand little dots of light. We asked Fletcher to read some of his poetry and he made no ado about complying. Now and then, as he read, he made little easy movements with his unoccupied hand, and so well did he read that it was a genuine pleasure to hear him. The three girls, sitting on the hearth rug, watched him with intense interest, their faces ruddy with the fire light, sympathy in their eyes. He chose Down the Mississippi, for the first of his longer selections, a piece of work which especially pleased us all, knowing as we did something of the river shipping. There were memories of all that joyful onrush of things at the landing stage—the swishing and churning of waters, the clanging bell, the ordering voices, the bewildering rushing of men, the sight of the lowered gangplank.

*And poised at the end of it, half naked beneath the
search-light,
A blue-black negro with gleaming teeth waits for
his chance to leap.*

It is a fine thing to be able to awaken the fancy and imagination as he did.

A Poet

I STARTED with Vachel Lindsey to walk from Fayetteville to Gayeta Lodge. It was raining and that discouraged Lindsey most sadly. Methought he who wrote the Handy Guide for Beggars should be made of sterner stuff. At any rate, he gave up half-way and returned to town. Still, we had some talk, though it was not at all the real heart-to-heart stuff, the brave self-revealing conversation I had had with Sandburg. Lindsey is harder of approach, more fenced in than the Chicago man. Yet Lindsey has his moments of exuberant animal spirits and one of them came earlier when our talk fell on the religious enthusiasm of the negro. His shy self-consciousness fell from him then and to the astonishment of a local preacher and the station agent, he half chanted some negro spiritual, doing it remarkably well too. All the burden of restraint was thrown off and the appearance of "armed neutrality" left behind, and he seemed at last to be enjoying himself. I am inclined to believe that what is whimsical, what is eccentric in Lindsey's work is the natural result of a nature in itself whimsical and eccentric.

The Spoon River Man

EDGAR LEE MASTERS spent a few hours at my place last week. He was on his way 'cross country, gathering material for a long poem, to be called Atlantis. We talked about many things, but more especially of contemporary literature and of criticism. Masters is a dyed-in-the-wool Menckinite, all for the disregard of tradition, burning for a Menckenized literature. He stands four-square opposed to Stuart P. Sherman, considers him indeed a "dangerous Puritan." Naturally we were at loggerheads. Between whiles I tried to point out that there was such a thing as a respect for tradition and also a sense of the value of individual judgment, but Masters could not see it that way. Masters feared the conservative hand, which, he said, would make for a loss of vitality in literature. I pointed out that there was in literature, as in all things, a certain balance and opposition of the so-called progressive and conservative forces, and that there need be neither submission to authority, nor yet any wild and rebellious flight towards lawlessness. But Masters seemed to fear that "repressive despotism," as he called it. Sherman loomed large to him, as some ominous figure that would force upon American letters a kind of rigid classicism.

Our most interesting hour was when we talked of old times—of Reedy and the Mirror; of Witter Binner's great hoax with his Spectra; of Masters' own

literary joke when he masqueraded for a year as Elmer Chubb, L.L.D., Ph.D., professor of ethical culture; of the sonnets Reedy wrote under the name of Chubb; of the things I wrote in the *Mirror* over the name of Jack Random; of the profound literary significance of Reedy's editorial work; of the ironical and gently humorous work of C. E. S. Wood; of the cultured and intelligent work of Silas Bent, and W. H. Hervey, and Zoe Atkins, and Frank Putnam, and Orrick Johns, and John Hall Wheelock.

Masters has increased in girth with the years. There is a certain mellowness about him. I used to think that he was a little too conscious of the responsible eminence he had gained on the appearance of his first *Spoon River*, but I now abandon that point of view. He has developed a certain philosophy of life that leaves him half melancholy, wholly pessimistic. It is a kind of fatalistic vein, à la Omar Khayyam. And there is a certain nervousness about him, almost as if he was weighted down with some care.

One thing especially I remarked. It was his keen observation. He did not fail to notice significant things; the song of the cardinal, the tiny green spears of growing things pushing their way to the light, the haze-hung valley, the alphabetical arrangement of my books, the trees on the flank of the mountain, the photographs of this one and that on the walls, his own Mitch Miller tucked between Mencken's *Prejudices* and Masefield's *Enslaved*, the children's play-house down on the lawn. Like a flash he saw all these and more. And he seemed to take a very keen interest in the views on social and political questions of those he met.

Two Chicago Men

EN GARDE, messieurs! I talk of myself and my travels. Just before Christmas, after consultation with astrologers who found the days of good omen, I left my quiet pastures bound on a pilgrimage, and made for the city of Detroit, where I beheld a quantity of wealth beyond all telling, as you shall hear in good time. So also shall you hear of the shining crown and loud trumpets that attended me, so to speak, when friends there, regardless of possible rueful consequences, thrust me into a broadcasting room and made me discourse. And I was the honored guest of many, some of whom bade me rest until the snows should melt, and everywhere was hospitality and sociability and geniality.

But after three days I longed again for my fields, gardens, woods and sunset glories, so turned my steps westward, and in time reached Chicago. There I sought out Harry Hansen, and Keith Preston, and that finest tempered man, Carl Sandburg, so found another hour infinitely refreshing and sustaining. An hour? We must have sat at dinner for more than two hours discussing things with tremendous zest, and probably would have sat longer had I not chanced to notice the waiter who stood as one indulging in lonely visions, whereupon the party broke up to conciliate him.

About Harry Hansen I had long been curious. His column in the *Chicago News* revealed him as a

shrewd and honest critic; his work in the Nation and in the Herald-Tribune supplement and Harper's easily proclaimed him as a literary figure of real distinction. Machine-made stuff he was obviously innocent of. As professional journalist he certainly stood no lower than Defoe and possessed an equal knack of interesting his hearers. And always there was apparent that indescribable literary touch, that ease without effort.

The man struck me as being younger than I had supposed. He is one of those with an air of culture about him, one who listens and seems to weigh what is said, one curious and interested, with nothing forced, nothing insincere about him. When he talked about books and writers, in his office in the morning, he gave the impression of a man with a literary background, and there was evident a thoroughness, an enthusiastic minuteness about him. Because of that, and because of the work that lay before him, I could not help wondering what might come from such a man, if he had the leisure of a Holmes or a Saintsbury. For while his is an air of serenity, it cannot be doubted that there are moments when he dreams of living life more upon his own terms than he does now. Every man must do so. Indeed, Hansen seems now and then to let the thought find expression. For instance, in his *Ebb Tide*, I find this, in a passage stating that nothing significant has appeared in the year of 1924. "On the whole, the grip of commercialism has rested heavily on the shoulders of our home-grown authors." But suppose that grip of commercialism to be removed from the Hansen shoulders. What then? For here is a man of brilliant talent whose work is entirely ephemeral, so far. And yet, logical and lucid and fair

as he is, he stands as one well qualified to win success in many fields—as critic, as essayist, as historian of his own times.

Indeed it is amazing to me how he, or anyone else, can work at all in that turmoil, with that rushing to and fro, with that infernal clashing and shrieking, with that hullabaloo and bombilation everywhere, in that atmosphere of frantic haste, in that tumult of vast forces. And if he does so very ably in a hell of distraction and against all that thundering background with beating presses speeding up things, what might not be expected were his lines laid in pleasant places? Certainly the Hansens, the Van Dorens, the William Griffiths, the Benéts, the Franks must tend to become cogs in the machine, must be robbed of some of their full dignity, must be partially submerged so long as that grip of commercialism holds them, and it is nothing less than a calamity that things should be so. And yet they do fine work amidst all that endless combat; excellent work, thought stimulating work, illuminating work. Thrust your Defoes, your Danas, your Greeleys, your Taines, your Addisons, your Hazlitts, your Saintsburys in to the midst of such conditions and they would give up in blank despair.

Looking at Keith Preston, a queer remembrance of a line read somewhere came into my mind. "And then he awoke and sang," it ran. For that is the kind of man Preston is; one who would, as a general thing, carol with the lark, or what is the Chicago equivalent, perhaps some ululating factory siren. Preston is one of those vivacious men you find in the fo'c'sls of ships, in miners' shanties, in lumber camps,

wherever men are together; men who, in light-hearted way, are everlastingly embarking on some crusade of joy. He is the William Marion Reedy type of man, mercurial, witty, fluent, facetious; full of interest in other minds and other men. He can roll a Rabelaisian jest, can turn a limerick, can spin a yarn, and when danger clouds gather, can avoid complications and intricacies with a bon mot, and all without strain or effort. No danger of his Periscope column ever becoming dull or tiresome. He is a kind of Ben Johnson in wit; a Calverley, a Sam Weller, a Mark Tapley, a rollicking latter day Charles O'Malley—a cheering-up kind of young man. Perhaps Tom Hood would be the nearest and best comparison because of that good-tempered, gay, trifling atmosphere about him; because of his good-humored, extravagant fun. And on occasion there is a caustic and pungent wit in his writing, very amusing to all but the victim of it. If the story that is told of Preston is not true, it ought to be. I refer to the story of the phrenologist who ran a "studio" somewhere on lower State street. Preston, as the tale runs, had his chart made, and asked the professor about his bump of reverence. "Bump!" exclaimed the phrenologist. "Why, it's a hole."

A Recital

I WENT to Æolian Hall in New York, and there saw and heard the youth from Detroit. But I saw other things, for, a little in front of me, sitting with his cheek on his hand, his brow slightly knit was a man I had known years before, one I had always supposed to be more interested in finance and success and civics than in music and literature. So I was astonished to see him there until I found the link, as it were, then things rushed together with a click.

Not to make a mysterious tale of it, it was this way. Down in the basement of Ohio, down where there are streets dingy and narrow, near the river in Cincinnati, in a rather depressing kind of place, I once managed railroad properties for that very man and we got along very well, more because of his patience than my wisdom, for often involved circumstances made for friction. However, on the whole, things went very well and the main impression I had of my man was of one entirely honest and, except in a commercial way, unimaginative. I thought of him as a kind of industrious apprentice as it were, delightfully unconscious of the world of beautiful things, a man of prudent wisdom. So, in my heart of hearts, I privately pitied him, for, while I was doing this and that and the other very harshly and continuously in the day's work, the inner man of me played with a kind of elevated idealism and I theorized as to the ultimate possibility of an aristocratic world state and all that

kind of thing. And I remembered one afternoon very distinctly when he and I rode side by side on a trolley car, he told me something of his financial troubles while I burned to talk of a Paderewski concert that I had attended the night before, yet said nothing of it, deeming my companion unresponsive to all that. For, observe, there are priggisms and priggisms, and mine was the superlative Nietzschean priggism of fancied superiority. So while we often met, we both hid behind a screen of words, neither discovering the other, and, when you come to think of it, men always have and probably always will persist in thus hiding themselves, and it is not extravagant to assume that if Shelley had walked into that saloon in New York what time John Mascefield was bartender, though the one might have been full of his Adonais and the other full of his Dauber, the conversation might have been all about Budweiser and pretzels. As for me in those railroad days, I am sure that if, at one of the directors' meetings I had suddenly commenced to rhapsodize on Rossetti, or, looking at a certain bridge that crossed the turbulent Little Miami had quoted, be it ever so aptly, from Nineveh:

"Ah! in what quarries lay the stone
From which this pillared pile has grown."

the men most concerned would have regarded me as a much to be pitied manager in whose brain some artery had suddenly burst. And it is equally certain that if Henry A. Haigh had slipped from a discussion of bonds to a dissertation on Beethoven, I would have revolted and entered an energetic objection. So, though our business associations stretched over some years and though we sat at many a lunch in the

Sinton or the old Bismarck what time beer drinking was not sinful, yet we never talked of anything but dollars and vouchers, of traffic and ties, and, sometimes, by way of jest, mentioned the name of William Jennings Bryan and his schemes of institutional reform.

Presently then we parted, after tremendous financial mazes had been threaded, and, be it said, there were times of trouble when my man had full scope for his special honesty of thought, so that I admired him mightily in spite of his imagined blindness to eternal things. Then came years and years, and all the troublesome days had grown into a memory rather pleasant than otherwise, and, lo and behold! there, as I have said, in the brightness of *Æolian Hall* came the leaping backward in time, when I saw a little in front of me, the man of that telling incisiveness of speech as he sat with his cheek on his hand, his brow slightly knit, very intent upon the slight figure seated before the grand piano on the stage. And the slight figure was his son, the young man out of the west, Andrew Haigh. Very intent too was the handsomely gowned woman with white hair and smiling eyes who sat by my man of Cincinnati. So in a flash I saw the whole thing—saw in all that bygone talk of railroad ties and ballast, of bond interest and notes, nothing but a kind of smoke screen to veil and to make possible major operations. I saw things. The hiding of ourselves from each other behind a screen of trivial words? Yes. Assuredly. But nevertheless for a purpose. Heartless rules of business? Yes. Most assuredly. But again for a purpose. Persevering industry and self-denial? Yes. That too. But again for a purpose. . . . It seemed, somehow, like looking at

a flowering plant and seeing it for the first time with clearness though I had seen it a million times. I had seen the root, as it were, thrusting, seeking, pressing forward with pain and privation and hardship. And to what end? Not for the purpose of groping and grubbing, but to the end that the flower might bloom. . . . Here darkness and something like mystery and there the bright flame, glowing, glowing. . . .

And Andrew struck me as being worthy of it all, a young man, sharp, clean-cut, immediate. There were circumstances that made me believe that he was especially promising, partly because of his own aptitude, partly because of what I had recently been hearing down in the Ozark country was of very secondary interest, mostly Chaminade. Because down there we are made to swallow brazen things, solo stuff for instance, broken up so as to be played on two pianos by fellows of myopic mentality who sit at the keyboard with their noses buried in the score with an intense unconsciousness of their own absurdity. Moreover, to impress gaping *hoi polloi*, there is no lack of head nodding and hand flourishing. So, for a moment, fresh from all that, it seemed almost odd to see the young man at the keyboard acting in quite normal and unstudied way, intent only on his work and perfectly heedless of his audience.

Haigh, I say, worked thoughtfully, with assurance and certainly with technical skill. That was seen in the Bach-Liszt Fugue. Listening, I had the idea of a busy brain commanding physical energy, the kind of sensation you get when you see a man touching a lever that will set a powerful machine in motion. There was rhythmic interest in that for me and I could trace the fugue in its development as I once

traced the outlines of the Antwerp cathedral when I looked at it—this part prefiguring that—this thus and so because something else was. Still, as all the world knows, in a Liszt number there is little opportunity for that pleasing individuality that marks the master. For that prince of the piano insisted upon his gold and scarlet effects, was so lavish as to permit of little more than effective transmission. Whoso plays the fiercer Liszt, indeed, is like a sailor working single handed in a gale of wind. So the real Haigh had to wait awhile, had to unfold himself gradually through the medium of the Beethoven sonata, and there it was that his individuality and his sincerity appeared. Color and rhythm were well displayed. There was an heroic disregard for the high priests and the playing was the playing of an enthusiast with the fresh, bright outlook of his age. There was decision, and intelligence, and subtlety, and the march of movement was glorious. And, of course, whoso plays Beethoven, must of necessity compass Chopin. Beethoven the temple in a tropical forest, Chopin the gorgeous quetzal bird taking added beauty from clustered flowers.

Andrew Haigh as a composer came with a prelude in D minor, an apparently difficult composition showing a tendency to arabesque and decoration. It showed that the young man has pianism in his mind and not orchestration, and it also shows that he is not intent on modeling himself on any man. A positive individuality in fact. That was seen in his Dohnanyi. Dohnanyi the brilliant as some of us know him in that violin concerto in D minor, the Dohnanyi who demands facility and craftsmanship.

Looking at the audience, it seemed as if a handful

had been scooped from a world of men and women who itched to do things, who seemed bent on keeping the chords of their minds strung to the requisite pitch. So there came to my mind what my friend of the Pullman smoker had said. But that notion of the pushing root and the flower was uppermost and as I looked on the stage and saw the son, then back to the man, I seemed to catch a new meaning in the old-fashioned virtues and the old fashioned gospel of industry and prudence and thrift. Old-fashioned to be sure, but nevertheless true. Not day dreaming, but the power to appreciate a remote future good. Romantic ambition, yes, but also real discipline. For it was a crowning victory for Henry A. Haigh to sit there and see his son, but a crowning victory gained by persevering industry and self-denial on the part of the son as well as the father. And others there who listened in the auditorium had gained victories or were marching to victory, not by luck or craft or intrigue, but because they had armed themselves with candor and sincerity. Dreiser, for instance—Theodore Dreiser in all of his six foot something, clear-eyed and keen, a healthy human being with a healthy outlook on life. For who that has achieved has wrought more sincerely than Dreiser? Who has fought more sturdily for his ideals? I saw Paul Honorè too, red cheeked and healthy, direct and uncompromising, looking more like a sturdy lake-sailor than an artist, but a man of simple and unconscious high-breeding. But always, always sincerity. Then Carl Van Doren again, ringing true as a gold coin, the latter day Dick Steele who, because of rigid adherence to truth and to moderation of statement, conquers the good will of those opposed to his views.

Certainly one who has worked patiently for real and enduring results, is this Van Doren, a man to whom sensationalism must have been forever foreign. Robert Nathan too, Nathan of Autumn, man of finished and artistic work; Nathan simple and upright and sincere in his devotion to his work. And Michael Monahan, man of the silver voice and golden pen who looks like some real genial Irish priest, man beloved of Reedy the gentle souled, of Hubbard cynical and artful, of Mark Twain the precious rebel, of melodious Richard Le Gallienne. Then May Massie who is Kate Greenaway and Mrs. Molesworth combined. And Bolton Hall with the eyes of a prophet near a group of young fellows of musical bent. Other men, too, who concede nothing to modern quackery—Guy Holt, Maxwell Aley, Leslie Nelson Jennings, Don C. Seitz of that admirable life of Artemus Ward. Then Gretchen Dick, composer of songs sung by light hearted lovers, and Robert Bergmann, scenic artist, man of taste and talent and ideals. And Bobby Jones who has worked so patiently for real and enduring results. . . .

A handful, I said, scooped from a world of men and women who itch to do things and seem bent on keeping the chords of their mind strung to the requisite pitch. Henry A. Haigh, the man of affairs—Andrew Haigh, his son: the cultured, gentle lady with the white hair: those I met, writers, poets, artists, actors—back of all is seen the same thing, patient industry, frank honesty, rectitude of motive and purpose and unflinching integrity. There's the keynote.

Others

THERE were other literary lights we met on our trip, inventive and original fellows, clever women, amiable and attractive characters, and here and there a dull boor. At an affair at the Breevort there was splendid opportunity for observing a variegated assortment of entertaining people. There was Mary Austin for instance, provided with an ostrich feather by way of fan, Jane Austen returned to life most certainly. Edna Ferber, too, dark haired and vivacious, full of pleasantries and wit, vivid and striking, possessing not a little of the keen instinct of the controversialist. Then May Sinclair of the *Cure of Souls*, a timid little woman with an air of astonishment that she should have done anything at all remarkable, perhaps wondering, like one of the characters in her *Uncanny Stories*, because things would persist in happening in her immediate vicinity. Margaret Widdemer again, poet by inherent original quality of soul, innocent of repetition of imagery or tone. The things some of these said, amply compensated for the tediousness of the chairman.

At Indianapolis there was Meredith Nicholson, good-tempered, gay, and optimistic about politics, after a good lunch and over a fifty cent cigar. John Maxwell, too, was with us—Maxwell the student, well-aged before his time, man of courage and patience and kindness who has given his life to the study of Shakespeare, his enthusiasm undiminished

by rebuffs. It is the Maxwell who first discovered Theodore Dreiser, who gave him his first job. A dignified man, this, who played a great game. What truths and discoveries are buried in those wonderful manuscripts of his, Heaven only knows. In spite of his stoicism, a swift look of blank despair and stunned grief flashes into his tired eyes when he refers to the refusal of publishers to look seriously at his work.

William Rose Benét,—there is another of the same kind. A young man very tall, very judicial, about him a natural mixture of seriousness and pleasantry. And mark this, for it seems to be overlooked, but if you will read with care his signed articles, you will discover very often a kind of poetry in prose. Unfortunately, because of the very nature of his work, the beauty of his style goes unperceived. But take it from me—just as Mencken is the Hazlitt of our place and day, so is William Rose Benét the Walter Pater.

Then there was Mrs. Irita Van Doren, tremendously efficient, one of the most delightful women in the world, charming even in a dusty office walled with books, a woman thoughtful, cultured and intellectual. A stylist of the highest rank, entirely free from affectations. Stuart P. Sherman proved himself a good general when he selected her for his lieutenant in the conduct of the New York Tribune and Herald.

We spent an evening in Baltimore with Meredith Janvier, artist, bookseller, *viveur*, raconteur, student; the kind of man wonderfully able to do whatever he wants to do. I could live a life with such a one—free from pretense outspoken, innocent of bunk. The fellow has the imagination of the poet, the taste of the scholar, the heart of a buccancer. Sound to the

core, or I miss my guess. In appeaance, A Napoleon Bonaparte re-divivus, the picture of health. His house is an attractive one in Hamilton street, grilled door, hammered iron sign, quaint windows—the kind of place Thackeray would have revelled in. In a room upstairs is an open fireplace, and, let us say, trimmings to match. We spent three hours talking, or at least Janvier did, and I got in an occasional nod of approval sometimes a word.

Social

OUT at the Dearborn Country Club we had a little dinner and the conversation was discursive, but good. Somehow Carl Sandburg and I did the most of the talking, with Fred Black not so far behind. Black is one of those delightful men quick on the trigger to respond; or, sensing a dull place, willing to take upon himself the responsibility of making it bright. Black, by the way, has interested me tremendously with his examination of the Lincoln-Booth affair, and his complete refutation of the theory that Booth was not killed, but escaped and wandered about the world in broken-hearted solemnity. He followed every trail, ran down rumors, looked at everything in the light of common-sense although there was a mosaic of suspicion and half-proof, and presented the whole with strength and coherence. In a word he was clear and convincing. He squeezed all sentimentality out of the matter. His method was the method of Zadig. Then there was Cameron, editor of the Independent, seated at my left, a man with a certain earnestness about him, very likable, very genial, quite capable of thinking bluntly and fiercely on occasion, courteous and interested. I get him as a man thoroughly filled with a certain Carlylean spirit of duty, duty and duty. Beyond him again was Donaldson, a young man with whom I have corresponded for a couple of years, off and on, thus forging a bond which would not be easy to break,

which I hope is never to be broken. He strikes me as being a man full of a noble affection, trying his best to see things in a true light, doing his best not to be immured among received opinions. Both Cameron and Donaldson are of the *Convenanter* type, and not ashamed of it. That's what I like about them, that downright readiness to proclaim their beliefs. Let me put in this way. They are brave in a consciousness of their high responsibility. They have a religion in which they find strength. They deny that Christianity as a religion for the people has failed, but hold that it has not been tried. And it is a happy piece of business that you do not find them philisophizing about morality. Indeed, if I wanted to enjoy a social evening in which there would be no unpleasant friction and grittiness, but real good fellowship, I would not hesitate to put together such characters seemingly diverse, but quite harmonious as Cameron, Donaldson and Black, and Major Maddox; Dr. Boyd Cornick and Bolton Hall and Wilbur Macy Stone; MacMillan and Honoré and Captain Tom Hickman. There you would have Christian, anarchist, the soldier and the ranger, musician and artist, single taxer and doctor, bookman and philosopher, poet and man of action, all good-humored, all outspoken, all steering past differences with a delicate tact, none of them without a healthy and sane sense of proportion.

But to get on with the dinner party.

There was Paul Honoré, big and bearded, a person in every sense of the word—no great talker indeed, but tremendously interested in human ideas and their expression. So we sat about the table, with a half dozen others, and smoked and talked until the air

grew thick, when we broke up into sets. And when we got outside, there it was cold and brisk and frosty, with icicles fringing the wind shields and a cold moon scurrying. So I thought of Gayeta Lodge, where, when I left, the children were playing on the little pond on the creek with a tin trough for boat, with which they have most gallant adventures in the way of imaginary shipwrecks.

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